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RECOLLECTIONS

OF

MARSHAL MACDONALD

Héliog. Dujardin P. Plon Nourrit & Cie edit. Imp. Eudes

MARSHAL MACDONALD

(DUKE OF TARENTUM)

From the original by David

Paris Printed for Richard Bentley and Son 1892

RECOLLECTIONS

OF

MARSHAL MACDONALD

DUKE OF TARENTUM

B2711

EDITED BY

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24496

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I.

94-n-19

LONDON

RICHARD BENTLEY AND SON

Publishers in Ordinary to Her Majesty the Queen

1892

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923.544
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Guildford:
PRINTED BY BILLING AND SONS.

NOTE BY THE TRANSLATOR.

I THINK it well to draw the reader's attention to the fact that, in rendering the present work into English, I have not felt at liberty to omit the preliminary summary of the book by the French editor, himself a distinguished man of letters and a member of the French Academy. I desire to do this in view of the repetition of certain passages and incidents in the course of Marshal Macdonald's 'Recollections.'

S. L. S.

February 5, 1892.

CONTENTS OF VOL. I.

PAGE

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION - - - - - - 1

MACDONALD'S COMPANIONS IN ARMS, MARSHALS OF THE FIRST NAPOLEON, DIPLOMATISTS REFERRED TO IN THE 'RECOLLECTIONS' - - - - - - 113—118

CHAPTER I.

Family History—Journey to the Hebrides—Parentage—Brothers and Sisters—With Maillebois—Life at Sancerre—Gentleman-Cadet—At St. Germain—Marriage - - - - - - - - - - 121—135

CHAPTER II.

First Campaign—Battle of Jemmappes—Appointed Colonel—Arrival at Lille—Dumouriez's Treachery—Events at Lille—Interrogation—End of the Incident - 136—154

CHAPTER III.

General Lamarlière—Macdonald appointed Adjutant-General—Execution of Lamarlière—Skirmishes at Linselles and Commines—Entry into Lille—A warlike Commissioner—Denunciation—A Loyal Friend—A Broken Reed—Extension of Command—General Pichegru—Belgium and Holland—Battle of Hooglède—On the Waal - - - - - - - 155—169

CHAPTER IV.

PAGE

Passage of the Waal—Its Results—Reconnaissance at Arnheim—Arrival at Naarden—Capitulation of Naarden—On the Banks of the Yssel—Delfzyl—The Peace of Basle—Command in Overyssel—Ordered to Walcheren — Fever — Removal to Utrecht — Convalescence - - - - - - - - - 170—182

CHAPTER V.

Army of the Sambre and Meuse—Donauwerth—Operations on the Rhine—Neuwied—Mistake of General Castelvert — His Excuse and Recall — At Düsseldorf — Fresh Hostilities on the Rhine — Arrival of General Augereau — Politeness and Literary Attainments of General Lefebvre—Macdonald summoned to Paris - - - - - - - - - - 183—188

CHAPTER VI.

Ordered to Italy—The Army of Rome—General Championnet—Insurrection in Rome—Championnet's Flight —Evacuation of Rome—General Mack—Nepi and Otricoli — Differences with Championnet — Explanation - - - - - - - - - - 189—204

CHAPTER VII.

At Fort Sant'-Angelo—Junction with Kellermann—Return to Rome—A Speedy Decision—Before Capua—A Truce —Arrest of Mack—Commander-in-Chief of the Army of Naples—Arrival at Naples—Rising in Naples—Insurrections in the Country—Miracle of St. Januarius —Preparations - - - - - - - - 205—222

CHAPTER VIII.

PAGE

Bad News—Advance to Rome—Alarm for Naples—Departure from Rome—Sarzana and Pontremoli—Rising in Tuscany—Surrender of Fort Sant'-Elmo—A Brave Action—Capitulation of Ferrara—Generals Montrichard and Schérer—Offer of Resignation 223—238

CHAPTER IX.

Battle of Modena—The Marshal in Danger—Severely wounded—Montrichard's Mistake—Austrian Breach of Faith—March towards the Trebbia and Tidone—Battle of the Trebbia - - - - - - 239—256

CHAPTER X.

Absence of Moreau—Victor's Delay—Flight of Victor—Plans for Retreat—Difficulties of the March—Modena and Sassuolo—Hesitation of Moreau—Blockade of Mantua—Concentration near Genoa—The Army of the Alps - - - - - - - - - 257—273

CHAPTER XI.

A Valuable Collection Lost—Joubert Commander-in-Chief—Fall of Mantua—Death of Joubert—Back in Paris—Action against Moreau—Landing of Napoleon—The 18th Brumaire—Reorganization of the Armies—Moreau's Double-dealing—The Army of the Grisons—Peace of Lunéville—Diplomatic Mission to Denmark - - - - - - - - - 274—284

CHAPTER XII.

PAGE

At Copenhagen—Diplomacy against the Grain—Recall to France—Monsieur de Talleyrand—Trial of Moreau—Napoleon elected Emperor—The Legion of Honour—In Disgrace—Purchase of Courcelles—Recalled to Active Service—Domestic Arrangements - - 285—294

CHAPTER XIII.

Departure for Italy—Untrustworthy Intelligence—A Bad Beginning—Arrival at Vicenza—Prince Eugène—Warnings and Defensive Measures - - - 295—307

CHAPTER XIV.

Defence of the Alpone—Retreat of the Archduke John—Combat on the Piave—An Incomplete Success—Capitulation of Prewald—Siege of Laybach—Advance to Gratz - - - - - - - - - 308—323

CHAPTER XV.

Arrival at Gratz—Advance to Raab—Battle of Raab—Before Komorn—The Eve of Wagram—Battle of Wagram—The Marshal's Bâton - - - 324—348

NOTE - - - - - - - - 353

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

IN THE FIRST VOLUME.

I.

MARSHAL MACDONALD, DUKE OF TARENTUM, ON HORSE-BACK . . . . . *to face page* 54

From the original by Eugène Charpentier, engraved by Paul Girardet.

II.

MARSHAL MACDONALD, DUKE OF TARENTUM. (*Head*) *Frontispiece*

Photogravure from the picture by David.

III.

MARSHAL MACDONALD, DUKE OF TARENTUM. (*Quarter-length*) . . . . . *to face page* 121

Probably from the original by Gerard, and engraved by Hopwood.

IV.

FACSIMILE OF MARSHAL MACDONALD'S HANDWRITING *to face page* 198

Letter giving account of narrow escape of his son from drowning.

V.

MARSHAL VICTOR (PERRIN), DUKE OF BELLUNO. (*Full length*) . . . . *to face page* 246

VI.

THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON. (*Half-length*) . *to face page* 280

From the original by Philippoteaux, engraved by Wolff.

VII.

THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON (ON HORSEBACK) AT THE BATTLE OF WAGRAM. . . *to face page* 336

From the painting by Horace Vernet, engraved by Paul Girardet.

VIII.

THE BATTLE OF WAGRAM. CUIRASSIERS WAITING TO CHARGE . . . . *to face page* 340

From the original by Raffet, engraved by Geoffroy.

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION.

In the month of May, 1825, the sexagenarian Marshal Macdonald, left a widower for the third time, was plunged in the deepest grief. By his previous marriage he had only daughters; the last marriage, solemnized scarcely four years before and which had terminated so grievously, left him a son, heir to his name. It was for him—for this child still in the cradle—that, far from Paris, far from the commonplace consolations and condolences of the Court, the Marshal undertook, not to distract, but to occupy the isolation caused by his sorrow, in noting down the various stages of his long and glorious career. He did not pretend to write memoirs; they are simply recollections destined for the child who was alone to see them in the future. Sixty-five years have elapsed since they were penned; more than fifty have come and gone since the Marshal died, and his granddaughter, Madame la Baronne de Pommereul, has thought that, in the interest and for the

advantage of history, as well as for the reputation and fame of her ancestor, the moment has come to lift the veil which, until now, has covered these 'Recollections,' and has entrusted to me the task of revealing them to the public. It is a great honour, for which I am grateful to her. I could not help feeling respectful emotion as I turned over those pages impregnated with sincerity, and which breathed forth truth like a refreshing perfume. On no occasion, nor in any presence, did Macdonald conceal his thoughts, even when with the greatest of men, with Napoleon as with Louis XVIII.

Ask him for truth; he will lay it before you in bare simplicity, neither coloured nor cloaked; do not ask him for ornaments of style. He has made several candid confessions with regard to this. 'On reading this hastily-written narrative,' he says, early in his 'Recollections,' 'you will easily see, my son, from the broken sentences, the repetition of words, the mistakes in spelling and punctuation, how absorbed I am in the over-mastering remembrance of our misfortune, and you will judge of the state of my mind from those things better than from any description I could give you. Moreover, I never read anything a second time, not even my letters; but I treat my official correspondence, suggestions, reports, instructions, opinions, very differently. You will be struck by a remarkable difference of style; mine is generally

abrupt, concise, and to the point, when the matter in hand needs no elucidation, for, as a rule, this is destructive of energy.' Elsewhere he says: 'I have not patience to re-read what I have already written, owing to a bad habit long since contracted, because, writing much and very rapidly, I should find many mistakes; but in order to correct them, I should have either to scratch them out or begin afresh, and I have not time for that, although I am a very early riser. I know the value of time, and how to make the most of it. Do not, however, imitate my bad habits; write less and more correctly. But these historical notes are for you alone, and you will make allowances for your father.' I feel assured that the reader will be no less indulgent, for in this case the facts are a hundred times more interesting than the style.

There is no single erasure in this manuscript of 472 folio pages; there are consequently a certain number of detached or amphibological sentences, of which it has been found necessary to restore the equilibrium or the sense. With these exceptions, and with the omission of a few intimate details of precious interest for the family, but with none for anyone unconnected with it, the text has been treated with the respect it merits. Having said this, I ask permission of the reader, before he embarks upon these important 'Recollections,' to present him with an abridgment of the entire

narrative, together with some explanations that I have discovered among the archives of the War Office in Paris.

I.

Neil Macdonald, father of the Marshal, was born on one of the last days of the year 1719, at Boubry, or Coubry,* in South Uist, one of the Hebrides. Educated in France, at the Scotch College at Douai, he had returned to his own country, when the advent of the Pretender Charles Edward set Scotland in a blaze and imperilled the Hanoverian dynasty. An ardent Jacobite, Neil was one of the first to join the Pretender, and remained faithful to him to the last, when evil fortune compelled them both to seek safety in France. The proscribed Jacobite was, at the end of 1747, provided with a lieutenancy in Albany's Scotch regiment, and later on in that of Ogilvie; but, at the peace of 1763, most of the foreign regiments in the service of France were disbanded, and Neil Macdonald had great difficulty in obtaining a meagre pension of 300 louis (about £30) a year.

His son, Jacques-Etienne-Joseph-Alexandre, the future Marshal, was born on November 17, 1765, at Sedan, whither he had retired. The family shortly afterwards left Sedan and took up their abode at Sancerre.

* *Vide inf.* p. 126, note.

As soon as young Macdonald was of an age to commence serious studies he was sent to Paris, and confided to the care of a compatriot, Chevalier Pawlet (*sic*), who managed a sort of half-civil, half-military academy for young gentlemen. The new-comer joined with the idea, impressed upon him by his family, that he was destined for the Church, and with dreams of a canonry at Cambrai; but his military instincts prevailed, 'Especially,' he tells us, 'after reading Homer, which set my brain on fire; I thought myself an Achilles.' He had to undergo a disappointment; having passed but an indifferent examination in mathematics, he was prevented joining as an Engineer the Practical School for Artillery and Engineering (*École d'application de l'artillerie et du génie*). He was in despair, until a fortuitous circumstance came to open for him a back-door into the army.

This was in 1784. The Dutch were in difficulties upon the subject of the navigation of the Scheldt with their powerful neighbour, the Emperor Joseph II., sovereign of Belgium. They had but an insignificant and quite insufficient army, and required generals, officers, and men. A French gentleman, the Comte de Maillebois, more or less authorized by the Government, raised on their behalf a legion composed of all arms; thanks to the recommendation of some persons in good position, young Macdonald was included as

a Lieutenant of Infantry. He was almost beside himself with delight. While under Pawlet's roof he fancied himself an Achilles; now he modestly limited his hopes to becoming a Turenne. He started for Holland, and actively employed himself for several months in drilling his company; but, alas! just as the campaign was expected to open, peace was concluded, peace with its results, the disbandment of the legion. The Dutch, good and thrifty managers, had stipulated that in case this not unforeseen event should happen, a life-pension should be granted, consisting of half the monthly pay, and saddled with the express condition that it should be spent in their country, or an indemnity, once for all, of a sum down calculated upon four years of the said pension; to which it must be added that the military year in Holland consisted only of eight months, each month counting as forty-five days. Could Macdonald accept the first alternative at the risk of vegetating for the rest of his days as a poor pensioner of the United Provinces? He preferred the sum down, and retired.

He was now without a profession, as the Maillebois regiment had never had a recognised existence in France, and accepted with alacrity a proposal to begin his way up the military ladder from the lowest rung, not even with a sub-lieutenant's commission, but as a gentleman-cadet, that is to say, as rather less than an officer. Thus it

came about that he joined Dillon's Irish regiment. At the end of six months he was named Brevet Sub-lieutenant, and after another six months received the titular rank. Then he travelled from garrison to garrison, always working hard, and was in Calais when his father died at Sancerre in 1788. In October, 1791, he was promoted to a Lieutenancy in Dillon's regiment, and was first married. The Revolution was now in full activity, and war soon followed.

General Beurnonville, who knew and appreciated him, obtained his appointment as Captain, and took him as aide-de-camp; but he could only keep him for two months, because Dumouriez, Commander-in-chief of the Army of the North, wished to take him in the same capacity. Beurnonville, in the interest of his *protégé*, strongly urged him to accept the Commander-in-chief's proposal. The advice was good, for in less than five months Macdonald became a Lieutenant-Colonel, the reward for his bravery at the battle of Jemmappes. Early in the winter of 1793, he chanced to be on leave in Paris, when Beurnonville, now War Minister, appointed him to the Colonelcy of the Picardy regiment—Colonel at eight-and-twenty, and, moreover, Colonel of Picardy, the chief of the four *old* corps, the head of the French infantry! As he himself says, surely that was enough to satisfy the most boundless ambition; but fortune was not always going

to smile so sweetly upon him, and his fate hung for a moment 'by a thread.'

Dumouriez had been defeated at Neerwinde, and, now become 'suspected,' nearly dragged Macdonald with him in his fall; while, at the same time, he lost the support of Beurnonville, who had been handed over to the Austrians by Dumouriez. It was but a lightning-flash; but the storm continued to mutter round his head, with occasional threatening gleams. Commissioners from the Convention succeeded each other in turn at Lille, all prejudiced against the Picardy Colonel, all excited by denunciations, accusations, and jealous rivalries. However, he continued to discharge his duties with the same zeal, the same energy, and the same success. At length the thunderbolt fell. It took—will it be believed?—the form of promotion to the rank of General of Brigade, a promotion conferred by the Commander-in-chief, Houchard, and confirmed August 26, 1793, by the representatives of the people, Levasseur and Bentabole.

'This,' he tells us, 'came upon me like a thunderbolt, as, although for several months past I had performed the duties of the office, I had not had the responsibilities attaching to the rank. I represented that I was youthful and inexperienced; but they would not listen. I had to bow to their decision, under pain of being treated as a "suspect" and arrested.'

Thus he now becomes a General—that is to say, more conspicuous, more responsible, and consequently more exposed. He had fresh successes, which carried in their train fresh jealousies, enemies, and calumniators. Fresh representatives came, with the most extended powers. Their first act was intended to be the deprivation of Macdonald, followed by his arrest and arraignment before the Revolutionary tribunal at Arras. Happily for him, the Commissioners received orders to hasten to Dunkirk without delay. While awaiting their return, General Souham, commanding at Lille, and who had some friendship for Macdonald, advised him to cross the frontier. He refused. A previous Commissioner had publicly expressed confidence in him some time before.

'He!' replied Souham. 'I called upon him to speak up for you, but he was silent.'

'Never mind,' answered Macdonald; 'maybe he was intimidated by his superiors. I should like to try him.'

'Do so,' was the reply, 'and then come back to me.'

Macdonald departed in search of his friend, and, on finding him, said:

'Look here, you know that I am in disgrace, and have come to beg your help.'

'Indeed!' replied the other. 'Do you wish me to speak quite openly to you? I tell you, you

are not a republican, and I neither can nor will mix myself up with you.'

'But I have not changed, as far as I know, since we met on the frontier, and on that occasion you assured me publicly——'

'I remember what you mean, but times are changed,' and he turned on his heel.

Notwithstanding Souham's renewed entreaties, Macdonald refused to fly; and it was well for him that he did so. The special Commissioners were unexpectedly recalled from Dunkirk to Paris without going to Lille again, and this time he was once more saved.

Fresh Commissioners, fresh alarm! A decree of the Convention banished to thirty leagues of the frontiers, from the armies and from Paris, all '*ci-devant*' nobles. Pichegru had just taken over the command of the Army of the North. He knew that Macdonald was an excellent officer, and begged that he might be exempted by name from this measure. The Commissioners got over the difficulty by employing him. Macdonald demanded written orders from them, otherwise, said he, in case of a defeat, he would assuredly be accused of harbouring evil designs, or even treason, for having remained in the army despite the decree of expulsion. The written orders were refused.

'So be it!' he exclaimed; 'I shall send in my resignation.'

'If you leave the army we will have you arrested and brought to trial.'

He thus remained between two menaces of death; but, unknown to him, he had a protector in Paris—the representative Isore—who had seen him at work on the frontier. Macdonald was a foreign name, it was not preceded by the hateful particle '*de*,' therefore its bearer could not possibly be included or compromised among the '*ci-devant*' nobles. Such was Isore's argument, and he wrote to Macdonald as follows:

'I do not suspect your birth; you arrived at a good moment. There never was a more revolutionary period than ours, and the proofs are all in your favour. I have seen the War Minister, and have turned aside the storm that threatened you. Keep quiet, go on working as usual. If anyone worries you, I will stand up for you. Employ your talents, perfect your military science, and continue to pulverize all slaves. You need never fear deprivation.'

This was the last attempt made by revolutionary determination against Macdonald.

Under Pichegru he took an active part in the conquest of Belgium and Holland; it was at this time that he made the acquaintance of Moreau. Towards the end of November, 1794, he was quartered near Nimeguen, when he received, without ever having dreamed of such a step, his brevet of General of Division. He was just nine-

and-twenty, and three years previously he was a humble infantry Lieutenant. He inaugurated his new rank by a brilliant piece of work. The Waal was frozen over; on the right bank lay the lines of the Anglo-Hanoverians. One morning Macdonald fancied that he discerned among the enemy a tendency to retreat. Three divisions were under his orders at that time, and he made them cross the river on the ice; but the retrograde movement he had observed was merely caused by a misunderstanding. A severe combat ensued, and the enemy, who had previously had no intention of retiring, were compelled to do so, notwithstanding their resistance. What is even more to Macdonald's honour is that he took no credit to himself. It may be advantageous to draw attention to the reflections roused in him by his success, as they are a proof of his good-feeling, and may be profitable to his brethren in arms.

'I returned to Nimeguen to make my report. The Commander-in-chief and the Commissioners came to meet me. I was almost ashamed to receive their congratulations, because chance had had a much greater share in the success of the day than my combinations, which, as a matter of fact, were only founded upon the apparent retreat of the forces opposed to me, who, in reality, had no idea of such a thing. This event proves that in war it is necessary, on many occasions, to trust

to chance; for I repeat now what I said at the time, that I owed more to luck than to wisdom, although success is generally supposed to depend upon plans, schemes, and arrangements. On this occasion the evacuation of Thiel seemed to me the evident result of a retrograde movement, whereas, in reality, that movement was caused by a misunderstanding.'

Be that as it may, the passage of the Waal, executed by main force, carried with it most important consequences. The Dutch, separated from their allies, abandoned by them, gave up all hope for themselves. Naarden, the masterpiece of Cohorn, Vauban's rival—Naarden, which had arrested Louis XIV. in his triumph—surrendered to Macdonald without a blow. Very proud of this achievement, he hastened to carry the news to Pichegru.

'Bah!' answered the latter with a laugh. 'I pay no attention now to anything less than the surrender of provinces!'

The temperature had risen; Macdonald was once more able to cross the Yssel upon the breaking ice, but on the other side he had to march through mud, and shortly afterwards floods covered roads and fields. He thus reached the Ems, on the other bank of which he perceived the Prussians; but they had merely come to inform him that peace had been signed between France and Prussia. He paid for the fatigues of this severe

campaign by a violent attack of fever, which nearly carried him off, and which the doctors could not subdue for a twelvemonth.

In September, 1796, he was ordered to the Rhine, to cover the retreat of the Army of the Sambre and Meuse. He went thither again the following year, when the peace of Campo-Formio put a stop to the progress of the French armies in Germany. It was then that General Augereau arrived at Cologne, covered with the laurels of the 18th Fructidor, over and above the palms of Castiglione. The new Commander-in-chief was resplendent with gold lace; he even wore it on his short boots. He conceived the utmost contempt for the miserable Army of Holland, famished and ill-clothed as it was, and boasted of the Army of Italy, of their comforts, their exploits, and his own, without once mentioning the name of their commander—General Bonaparte.

'There,' he said in presence of a number of poor ragged soldiers, 'was not a man in that army, bad character as he might be, who had not ten gold pieces in his pocket and a gold watch.' 'This,' remarks Macdonald, 'was a hint to our fellows.'.

Augereau's henchman was General Lefebvre; the 'Recollections' give us a few traits of the coarseness and eccentricity of this personage. The Commander-in-chief had asked the theatrical manager to provide him with some very revolu-

tionary play ; he was served with one of Voltaire's tragedies, either 'Brutus' or the 'Death of Cæsar.' Lefebvre, honestly believing that the piece had been written for the occasion, applauded with his clumsy hands, digging his elbow into his neighbour's side the while, and asking :

'Tell me, where is the chap who wrote this ? Is he here ?'

The neighbour was Macdonald.

II.

In the spring of 1798 he was placed at the disposal of General Brune, Commander-in-Chief of the Army of Italy. He was sent by the latter to Rome, at that time a Republic, to take command of a division in place of General Gouvion St. Cyr. Italy was in a state of ferment, the Neapolitans threatening. At the urgent request of the King of Naples, and more particularly of Queen Caroline, inveterate enemy of France and republicans, the Austrian Government had sent them General Mack, a famous tactician.

Macdonald had only 12,000 men at his disposal, more than half of whom were scattered along the Neapolitan frontier. He cautioned the Directory, and begged for reinforcements. His prayer was answered by the creation of the Army of Rome, distinct from the Army of Italy, with Championnet as Commander-in-chief. We must observe

here that this appointment was distasteful to Macdonald. Not that he did not do justice to Championnet's character, but only with reservations, which, if not actually unjust, were, at any rate severe, and not exempt from bitterness.

'It must be acknowledged,' he says, 'that he was a very brave man, but without much capacity. He had acquired a certain reputation while with the Sambre and Meuse Army, by commanding a division that had met with success. A faction had obtained his nomination as Commander-in-chief. He himself was a man of pleasant temper, and easy to live with; but he was surrounded by envious, pretentious, and ambitious men.'

Scarcely had Championnet joined, when he learned that, without any declaration of war, the Neapolitan army had crossed the frontier at several points, and was marching in columns on Rome. It was five or six times as numerous as the French army. Not feeling himself in a position to defend the city with efficacy, and fearing lest he should be enclosed there, the Commander-in-chief negotiated a convention of evacuation with Mack, and departed, leaving to Macdonald all the responsibility of carrying out the stipulations.

An insurrection immediately broke out; all the French who could be surprised singly—military or civil—were massacred. Macdonald's little division was outside the town, watching for the approach of the Neapolitans; inside the walls, with himself,

he had but a handful of men. Nevertheless, he boldly faced the storm, charging through the streets abutting on the Piazza del Popolo, and shooting at the windows. At length he got the better of the rising, but would not evacuate Rome during the night, and waited for daylight. The evacuation was effected with dignity and without precipitation.

Whatever might be said, it was, beyond doubt, a bad beginning, and needed reparation by force of arms. While Championnet went to rally his other divisions, Macdonald established himself at Civita-Castellana with, at the outside, 5,000 or 6,000 men. Mack attacked him there with 40,000. The position was a good defensive one; the Neapolitans failed, and fled to Rome, leaving their camp as it stood. This was the first of a series of successes: at Otricoli, where the hospital for the French sick and wounded was found full of corpses horribly mutilated; at Calvi, where 2,000 men forced 7,000 to surrender. Having done all this single-handed, Macdonald rejoined the Commander-in-chief, whom he found curiously embittered. In his correspondence, while giving an account of his brilliant and successful operations, he had written in a jocular manner, instead of blowing his trumpet, 'with no other intention than that of showing how little glory was to be obtained from fighting enemies who, a few days before, had proved themselves both boastful and

cowardly.' Now, jealous people had persuaded Championnet that his Lieutenant was laughing at him, and a dialogue was begun founded on this wrongful impression.

'"You want to make me pass for a —— fool."

'"What foundation have you for such a statement? How dare anyone suggest that I could display such a want of courtesy to my chief?"

'"Here is your correspondence."

'I explained it to him,' continued Macdonald, 'and he softened somewhat. General Éblé, commanding the artillery, came up at this moment; he was a friend of mine, and explained matters, and the General and I were outwardly reconciled.'

They returned victoriously to Rome, seventeen days after quitting it. That same evening a Neapolitan *parlementaire** was brought to Macdonald, to ask permission for a belated column from Viterbo to pass through the town.

"Are you in earnest in making such a request?' asked Macdonald.

'Certainly; they tell me a truce has been proclaimed.'

'You have been misinformed. Lay down your arms; that is the best thing you can do.'

'What! Lay down our arms? We are in force; we will defend ourselves.'

* *Vide inf.*, p. 181, note.

'Very good; you shall be taken back, and orders given to the commandant of Ponte-Molle to put all you gentlemen to the sword.'

'Is that your final decision, General?'

'Undoubtedly.'

'In that case I will surrender at once.'

He was the chief of the column. The scene was amusing, worthy of an Italian farce.

Next day there appeared a general order congratulating the army upon its success. Macdonald's division was scarcely mentioned, and all the promotions and rewards went to the staff. From Rome they advanced to Capua, which surrendered; then, instead of marching boldly to Naples, Championnet consented to grant an armistice for an indefinite time. This resolution, taken contrary to the strenuous advice of Macdonald, had at least an immediate and decisive result; after a heated and final discussion with his chief, Macdonald offered to resign, and his offer was immediately accepted.

Shortly afterwards the armistice was violated. The lazzaroni disarmed the garrison of Naples, organized themselves to defend the town, and Mack, who like Macdonald had resigned, was thankful to escape safe and sound from the clutches of the mob, who would have lynched him. The French army marched upon and took Naples in spite of the resistance of the lazzaroni. Macdonald went thither as a visitor, spent a week

there, and returned to Rome to await his farther destination.

One day he was aroused from his siesta by a courier, who brought him a decree dated 25 Pluviose, year vii. (13 February, 1799), appointing him Commander-in-chief of the Army of Naples in place of Championnet, who had fallen into disgrace. The two Generals passed each other near Aversa, without either stopping or speaking.

Macdonald arrived at Naples by night, in order to avoid the brilliant reception prepared for him. His command included not only the kingdom of Naples, at that time called the Parthenopeian Republic, but also the Roman Republic and Tuscany. It was a large territory, made more difficult by the want of facilities of communication, which scarcely existed even close at hand, between Naples and Salerno. Everything with respect to government, administration and finance, had to be organized. Macdonald was fortunate enough to find an excellent fellow-worker in Abrial, the Commissioner from the Directory. He laid upon his shoulders all administrative work, and gave himself up entirely to the cares necessitated by the military situation.

Insurrection was rife everywhere ; it came even to the gates of Naples, to Torre dell' Annunziata, while treason handed over to the English, who had landed from their squadron, the town of Cas-

tellamare. The insurgents were beaten, pursued as far as Salerno, and the tower retaken. In Naples itself tranquillity was maintained by a national guard, and, what was better still, by the lazzaroni, transformed into guardians of the peace since their leader had been dressed up in a colonel's coat laden with gold, especially about the pockets.

This was a great deal, but it was not enough. The storm made its mutterings heard all through Italy, from the Alps to the Gulf of Tarentum. Austria had taken up arms anew, and Russia had sent her mystical and impetuous General, Souvorof, to join Field-Marshal Mélas, who was descending upon the Adige. The Directory had entrusted the command of the Army of Italy to General Schérer. Foreseeing that a summons was more than probable, inevitable, Macdonald concentrated his forces. He proposed to his Government to evacuate the State of Naples and the State of Rome, retaining only such fortresses as were well supplied; 'But,' he says, 'the principle of keeping everything gained the day.'

He none the less continued his preparations. The larger portion of his troops were cantoned in front of Caserta, the forts of Capua, Naples, Gaëta, Sant' Angelo at Rome, Civita-Vecchia, Civita-Castellana, and Ancona, were provisioned. The heavy baggage, the *impedimenta* of every kind were forwarded to Rome and Tuscany, in-

cluding the objects of art that the French Government had taken from royal palaces and museums. After a first selection had been made of articles that were to enrich the Louvre collection, the Directory had decided that the remainder should be divided among the generals and superior officers of the Army of Naples in proportion to their ranks. The share given to the Commander-in-chief was valued by experts at no less a sum than 800,000 francs (£32,000), to which must be added all that Macdonald had bought with his own money, or received as presents at Naples, Rome, and Florence. No private individual could boast of a more splendid collection.

All at once he received, together with the news of Schérer's defeat at Magnano, and of the retreat of the Army of Italy, the order he had foreseen to march without delay, leaving the fortresses garrisoned. He had just obtained a great Neapolitan success—the miracle of St. Januarius ; but the heads of the Parthenopeian Republic were none the less terrified when he abruptly announced to them his departure, and begged them to remain at their post. The flying columns were called in, and the army started ; behind, around, and even in front of it, insurrections were breaking out. At Rome, among the supporters of the Republic, desolation and terror were no less lively than in Naples. In spite of everything a speedy advance was necessary, and an attempt had to be made

to stretch a helping hand to the Army of Italy, beaten back in Piedmont, and of which General Moreau had taken command in place of Schérer.

On reaching Pistoia, in Tuscany, Macdonald at once caused the outlets from the Apennines into the valley of the Po to be occupied, and put himself into communication with Moreau, who, after an attempt to maintain his position on the Bormida, had withdrawn into Liguria. General Dessole, his chief of the staff, came to confer with Macdonald, and they arranged a plan, whereby the Army of Naples should descend from the Apennines and fall upon the left flank of the Austro-Russians, while the Army of Italy, debouching from Genoa, should attack them in front, the two armies eventually joining at some point between Parma and Piacenza. But in order to ensure the success of this operation, the utmost exactitude in the respective operations was indispensable. Precise dates were indicated, and two divisions, separated by circumstances from the bulk of the Army of Italy (Montrichard's division at Bologna, and Victor's at Pontremoli), were provisionally placed under Macdonald's orders.

Weakened by the garrisons it had been obliged to leave in the fortresses, and by the fatigues of a forced march, the Army of Naples, even with this addition, could not put more than 25,000 or 30,000 men into the field. An observation of another

kind—a moral observation—should find admission here: owing to unfortunate jealousies the different armies were on bad terms with each other, and mutually belittled each other's qualities. This ill-feeling was known to exist in all ranks, from generals to privates. This spirit of dangerous rivalry excited the Army of Italy against the Army of Naples, so much so, that the two divisions belonging to the former, and temporarily annexed to the latter, were infected with it.

'General Montrichard was at Bologna,' says Macdonald. 'I did not know him personally, but presumed he was a man of talent and courage, as he had appeared to possess a reputation upon the banks of the Rhine, a reputation no doubt usurped, as I learned to my cost. I had praised him, never dreaming that he had been the principal cause of the loss of the Commander-in-chief, Schérer, on the Adige.'

Satisfied that Moreau would carry out his share of the plan agreed upon, Macdonald descended from the Apennines upon Modena with a portion of his forces, who were to be supported by Montrichard advancing from Bologna. A preliminary engagement took place on June 12, 1799; an Austrian corps was put to flight, and Modena occupied. After the combat, Macdonald waited on the Bologna road, expecting Montrichard, of whom he had no news, when a detachment of Austrian cavalry, who had lost their way, and were

being pursued and hotly pressed, suddenly debouched from a cross-road. Caught between this troop and a French battalion, which was just issuing from Modena, the Commander-in-chief had not even time to draw his sword. He was thrown, seriously wounded about the head, trampled under the horses' hoofs, and remained lying there unconscious. He only recovered consciousness at the end of three hours, and among the Generals who surrounded him, the foremost whom he perceived was Montrichard at last.

'This is your doing,' he said to him. 'Had your troops taken part in this action this mischance would not have befallen me.'

Montrichard tried to excuse himself by saying that the regiment at the head of his column had no cartridges, and that to procure any he would have had to wait for the train of artillery, which was quite at the rear.

'What!' exclaimed Macdonald. 'Regiments campaigning without cartridges! Why did you not discover it sooner? Were they all unprovided?'

'No; only the leading company.'

'Then why did you not throw it aside and let the others take the lead? A little more and we should have been driven back, and it would have been your fault entirely.'

He dropped his eyes and made no reply.

'I should have done well to withdraw his com-

mand from him then and there; we should have been saved many disasters caused by him; but he belonged to the Army of Italy.'

Thus the Commander-in-chief lay there sorely hurt and wounded. He wished to make the command over to one of his Lieutenants. All declined it, saying that the junction of the two armies could not be long delayed, and that then Moreau would naturally take command of the whole force. An advance was made towards the points of rendezvous, Parma or Piacenza, and at the latter place they were joined by General Victor. He handed to Macdonald a letter from Moreau, full of hesitation and uncertainty. Should he debouch by Castelnuovo, as Victor had done, or by Bobbio? or, again, by the Bocchetta? He had not settled anything when he wrote, but announced his movement for the 20 or 21 Prairial. They had now reached the 26; he, therefore, ought to be on the road, and perhaps already in action.

Two rivers, or, to speak more correctly, two torrential streams—the Tidone and the Trebbia—flow in parallel lines from the south to the north, from the Apennines towards the Po, above Piacenza. Between these two the army took up its position on the 29 Prairial (June 17). The enemy were in sight; some cannon-shots were exchanged, the first of that battle of the Trebbia which was to last for three days. Macdonald, compelled to remain

at Piacenza, could hear the firing. What could it be in front of his advance-guard? A detachment, perhaps, or at the utmost a body sent out for purposes of observation; for if the enemy had turned and faced them, Moreau must have stopped them by threatening their rear or right flank. The firing, however, increased; a division, which had attempted to cross the Tidone, had been driven back upon the others. At nightfall the French drew up in line upon the Trebbia.

The incidents of the day had compelled the enemy to deploy all their forces. Doubt was no longer possible: before them were Souvorof and Mélas, with the entire Austro-Russian army. Must they retire? No doubt it would be the wisest course; but supposing they did so, and Moreau coming up later found no Army of Naples there, and was consequently crushed by the enemy, would not the cry of 'Treason!' make itself heard?

After a night of physical and moral torture, Macdonald had himself carried to the head of his forces. All seemed tranquil, when, towards midday, five long columns of infantry, flanked by a large body of cavalry, appeared, and with yells hurled themselves against the French line; in spite of their renewed efforts they failed to break it. Evening drew on; everyone listened; they might hear the distant report of Moreau's guns; nothing was audible. Despite the inferiority of

his forces, Macdonald determined upon taking the offensive; the army wished it.

The attack was to have begun on the 1 Messidor (June 19), at nine in the morning; it was delayed until mid-day because Montrichard's division took three hours to form up in the centre of the line. The right and left wings advanced and drove back the enemy; suddenly the centre gave way, a gap was made, and the victorious wings had to fall back. As on the previous day, there was nothing for it but to take up the defensive again, and, as then, the defensive was immovable; the enemy charged a wall of steel. With the exception of the momentary weakness of the centre, the army had behaved admirably; but the losses were enormous: nearly all the Generals and superior officers were more or less seriously wounded. If the battle of the Trebbia cannot be actually called a victory, it certainly cannot be regarded as a defeat. It was a glorious day for the majority of those who had taken part in it.

Was a fourth attempt to be made? Yes, if any news came from Moreau; but none did come. Upon the unanimous advice of his Generals Macdonald ordered a retreat to commence at midnight, the bivouac-fires remaining alight and the guards at their posts. Owing to an unfortunate delay, analogous to that of Montrichard the foregoing day, General Victor did not move before six in the morning, in full view of the enemy, who

immediately began to pursue. The leading troops, who had a start of six hours, were obliged to turn, disengage Victor, and recover the artillery he had abandoned. On reaching Borgo San Donino that evening, Macdonald sent for General Victor, who, not caring to face a disagreeable explanation, sent back word that he was worn out and had gone to bed.

'Set your mind at rest,' was Macdonald's message to him, 'as to your artillery. The detachment that I sent to your help, when you begged for it, reached the spot where you ought to have been, and found neither friends nor foes. Your artillery was brought in without opposition, and I will restore it to you the first time we meet.'

This remark was not uncalled for; Victor regarded it as ironical. When, later on, he became a Marshal of France, Duke of Belluno, and War Minister, he showed that he had not forgiven Macdonald for making it; it had remained in his mind.

On the 2 Messidor, the very day on which the Army of Naples quitted the blood-stained banks of the Trebbia, Moreau at last made up his mind to debouch from Genoa by the Bocchetta; after a struggle with the Austrian General, Bellegarde, he retired into the mountains. Had this simple demonstration been made a few days sooner, it might perhaps have given victory to the Army of

Naples, as it would have delayed or recalled half of the enemy's forces.

'General Moreau,' says Macdonald, 'has never explained his conduct, although I have often pressed him to do so by word of mouth, by letter, officially, and by public summons. Why these delays? I am sure there was no ill-will on his part, but merely hesitation, which was in his nature. I cannot say the same for his advisers. Among them was one man in particular, Gouvion Saint Cyr, who had great influence, and was inspired by an unjust animosity against me. It was this man, I have since been told, who most powerfully contributed to augment this natural tendency to delay. What matters any detriment to the public weal so long as private spite can be gratified!'

The Army of Naples continued its retreat. In order to obtain provisions, it had to fight some small, unimportant skirmishes, and Macdonald reoccupied his former quarters at Pistoia. It was thence that he addressed to the Directory, together with his official report, a request for leave.

'I know not,' he wrote to the War Minister, 'what will be your opinion and that of the Government. For my own part, I have nothing to reproach myself with. I call the army to witness, and it may be interrogated. There is one important fact which I must bring to the notice of the

Directory, and that is the different denominations and dispositions of mind of the two armies. It has been noticed that the disposition of the Army of Italy has gained ground among our men, even among our Generals. I had Victor and Montrichard under my orders. Hasten, therefore, Citizen Minister, to bring about the suppression of the Army of Naples by uniting it to that of Italy.'

Some time afterwards, Abrial, now Government Commissioner in the Court of Appeal, wrote as follows to the War Minister:

'I have just read in the public newspapers that General Macdonald has been recalled, and I see no proposal made that he should be again employed in any manner. I do not know what accounts have been given to you of the Battle of the Trebbia; but I, who at the time was only eight leagues away from the field, who received the wounded, both men and officers—I, who was afterwards at Genoa with a thousand eye-witnesses, can declare to you that opinion is unanimous as to the wise manner in which he managed that affair. I do not know what General Victor may have said in Paris; but this I do know, that General Moreau at Genoa entirely exculpated Macdonald from the reproach of having given battle without waiting for the junction, and this declaration, moreover, was made in presence of General Victor and the Intendant Commissary of the fleet of Naples; we four were alone

together. Further, I have just received in Paris a letter from General Macdonald, addressed to me at Genoa, wherein he makes serious complaints of General Victor. 'Excuse me for going into all these details, but I consider it my duty to give my testimony to a General whose services I regard as valuable to the Republic.'

At Genoa Macdonald received the authorisation to return to France. On his first arrival in that town a disagreeable surprise met him. No news could be obtained of the magnificent collection of objects of art, which ought to have arrived there long before. On making inquiries, he learned that the waggoners, frightened by the insurrections in Tuscany, had left it at Pisa, where it had been pillaged, under colour of Italian patriotism, by honest people who had made a good profit out of their plunder. It was a serious loss, and a bitter disappointment.

III.

On his return to Paris he was received with marked coldness by the Directory, but the days of that Government were numbered. Bonaparte had just appeared unexpectedly; from all directions crowds flocked to him, and he, on his side, did not neglect to make advances to the right people, especially to Macdonald. He invited him to dinner in company with Moreau on one occasion. Conversation necessarily turned on the affairs of

Italy, and 'thenceforward,' writes Macdonald, 'the opinion of my amphitryon was settled in my favour.'

The 18th Brumaire arrived. Macdonald took a share in it by occupying Versailles with troops. As a memento of the occasion he received a sword, which the First Consul, wrote Berthier in an official letter, had sent him as a token of gratitude for the services rendered by him upon the 18th Brumaire, year viii. This was a first token, but another and more important one was to come. Two Armies of the Rhine were to be formed—one destined for Moreau, the other for Macdonald; but the former worked so cleverly to the detriment of the latter, that he succeeded in obtaining the command of both. Macdonald was indignant, and complained to the First Consul, who expressed surprise, and added that he fancied, from what Moreau had told him, that the matter had been settled between them.

'How could it have been so?' exclaimed Macdonald, 'after all that passed between us in Italy, and after the explanation of those events that you yourself had from us at your own table?'

'That is true,' replied Bonaparte; adding, 'Your health is not yet quite restored. Take care of yourself, and I will fulfil my promise presently.'

Everyone knows what the first Army of Reserve was, the Army of the St. Bernard and of Marengo; later on a second was formed, bearing the more

significant title of the Army of the Grisons, and of this the command was given to Macdonald. It was to operate among the Alps, between the Armies of the Rhine and of Italy, extending its right hand to the latter, and its left to the former. Moreau, who desired a reconciliation with Macdonald, sent him his congratulations.

'I must send you my sincere congratulations upon the choice made by the First Consul, both for your own sake, and for that of our future relations. I know that Bonaparte thought we had quarrelled, and was, therefore, afraid to place us so close together. One of my officers in Paris assured him that we were very good friends, and he was aware of it. I could have wished, however, that the First Consul had been somewhat less well-informed, and that he could have given you the command of the Army of Italy. Although my communications with you would have been less direct, it would have suited you better.'

Later on, after the victory of Hohenlinden, he wrote to him again :

'I did not know where you were, my dear General, at the time of the Battle of Hohenlinden ; I should otherwise have been delighted to inform you of this event. I had foreseen some of the obstacles that you would meet with, but had not believed them so great ; and I imagined that you would have been able to gain the valley of the Adige, which would have been of great advantage

to us. Had you remained where we are now, the Army of the Rhine would have easily reached Vienna. It would have sufficed for me to reinforce you with all that I have left behind me, to stop up the gaps in the Tyrol, and you could easily have marched through the valley of the Drave, where you could have covered my right, and gone through the Italian campaign. It was decided otherwise, and I think wrongly. We caused terrible damage to the enemy; their losses amounted to 120 guns, 5 Generals, 300 or 400 officers, and about 18,000 prisoners. Their army is in a state of utter disorganization. The Archduke Charles has just taken over the command; I expect that he will withdraw behind St. Pölten, about eighteen leagues distant from Vienna. His left will be at Bruck. If all continues well with the Army of Italy, I shall be free to go wherever I am sent; but if it meet with no success, I must remain where I am, to secure my right. Good-bye; I embrace you, and am your friend.'*

The obstacles that Moreau had foreseen for Macdonald, without regarding them as seriously as they deserved, arose less from the opposition of the enemy than from that of natural forces. The Army of the Grisons had had to cross the larger portion of the Rhetian Alps at their broadest part through snow, over glaciers, threatened by

* Both these letters are written in the second person singular, implying close intimacy.—*Translator's note.*

avalanches. A squadron of dragoons had been completely carried away and swallowed up in an abyss; many individuals had disappeared. But there was as much peril, perhaps even more, in advancing as in retreating, so the advance was continued, Macdonald leading the way at the head of the column. At length they attained the summit of the Splugen, rounded the Tonal, and descended on the other side into the valley of the Adige. In presence of this bold, incredible march the enemy had evacuated the Vorarlberg and the Tyrol.

After the conclusion of the Peace of Lunéville, between Austria and France, Macdonald, who had wintered at Trent, brought his army back through Upper Italy. When on the road he received a most absolutely unexpected piece of information —he had been appointed Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at Copenhagen! Certainly, if ever there was a man utterly unfitted for diplomacy, he was that man. His outspokenness was often deplorable; he was absolutely without pliability, possessed no clever arts of smiling or pretending pleasantly; in a word, his whole character was as anti-diplomatic as it was possible to be.

This occurred in March, 1801. He came to Paris, complained, and was told that his mission was rather military than anything else. Denmark, morally injured by England and in expectation of material injury, had sent to beg

for a French General to organize her defences. From this point of view the mission was flattering; but even before his arrival in Paris the misfortune had occurred, Copenhagen had been bombarded, and Denmark was in despair. Never mind; the First Consul desired Macdonald to go. It was on the cards that the defensive alliance between Russia, Sweden, and Prussia might be renewed in behalf of the interesting little kingdom. He therefore started, and, on reaching Berlin, learned that Russia had come to an understanding with England. Still he received orders to push on; an armistice had been proclaimed, and negotiations were in progress at Copenhagen. There was nothing for him to do; but, nevertheless, he was kept in this sort of exile for another five months. He was loud in his praises of the Danes, but their kindly reception of him could not obliterate France from his memory. When the Treaty of Amiens re-established some sort of understanding with England, he thought he had reached the end of his troubles. Not at all; he was then offered the Embassy in Russia, but refused it decidedly, and eventually obtained his recall.

'I had a suspicion,' he tells us, 'that Monsieur de Talleyrand had some motives, that I could not penetrate, for wishing to keep me at a distance. I had written him strong representations upon this point; but, as he might have been prejudiced or

biased against me, I called upon him. He received me with cold civility. I warmly pointed out to him, in presence of his wife and several other persons, how ill he had behaved, and abruptly quitted his house. Since then I have ceased to hold any communication with this personage, who afterwards degraded more and more his name and position. He has certainly from time to time made overtures to me, but in vain. I had judged correctly the sincerity of his affection. His ambition, however, had been amply satisfied at the Imperial Court as well as at that of the Bourbons; his supple mind, intrigues, and insinuations had secured this. When at last he came to be better known and understood, all parties agreed to throw him aside, and to let him extract what enjoyment he could out of a comparatively insignificant office,* and to live in regret if not remorse. I admit having said too much about this individual, but it is because I know that he did me serious injury in the eyes of the First Consul by prejudicing him against me, and suggesting that I was a foe to his authority.'

As a fact, Macdonald was, from 1801, in some degree in disgrace; and, three years later, in worse than disgrace, for an attempt was made to implicate him in Moreau's trial, but 'it seemed, however, to be recognised that my conscience was clear upon that point, and so I was only watched

* He was Grand Chamberlain.

and all my actions spied upon; but I was left in peace.'

Marshals were created after the proclamation of the Empire; naturally, he was not among the number.

'I had to content myself with thinking that I had deserved to figure upon the list, and, with the pride natural to me, added to the feeling that I was the victim of injustice, I took no steps to destroy groundless prejudices. The time came when I congratulated myself upon having acted as I did, for circumstances so favoured me that I was able to win my bâton at the point of my sword on the field of Wagram.'

However, on the institution of the Legion of Honour, he was, to his great surprise, appointed a Knight Companion (*Grand Officier*). 'In the suspected position,' he says, 'in which I was then living, it could only be regarded as a favour.'

He had just bought his property at Courcelles, and there he lived as a country gentleman occupied with agriculture, following in imagination, and not without regret, the victorious course of the French arms, but convinced that a military career would never reopen for him. One day in March, 1807, he suddenly received from the War Minister an announcement that he was authorized to go to Naples and place himself at the disposal of King Joseph. Authorized? How? He had

never asked for this authorization or any other. No doubt some well-meaning but clumsy friends had begged, or caused it to be begged, unknown to him, from the King of Naples. To be sure he had commanded there, and might be able to render real services; but on what footing? Not as a General summoned to command French troops, but as a Neapolitan official or General.

'My blood boils even now, and my fury rises,' he says in his 'Recollections,' 'as I write these lines and think to what a degree of abasement I should have fallen had I been desired to command Neapolitan soldiers. I, who had fought and annihilated them at Civita-Castellana, at Otriçoli, who had completely finished them at Calvi, although on all these occasions we were less than one against twelve or fifteen! I, who had been witness of their cowardice, their desertion, and their flight! I, who had invaded their territory! I say no more. . . .'

Two years later—in April, 1809—he received another despatch (for his previous indignation had been justifiable), and this one contained a splendid and complete reparation: an order to join the Army of Italy, under the orders of Prince Eugène, Viceroy and Commander-in-chief. He hastened to Paris. Without further explanation the Minister showed him the Emperor's laconic note:

'MONSIEUR LE DUC DE FELTRE,

'Convey orders to General Macdonald to betake himself to Italy, where he will receive fresh orders from the Viceroy. I shall be grateful to him for the services he will thus render.'

'The great need in which they stood of Generals and officers, in consequence of continuous wars,' says Monsieur Thiers, 'compelled them to have recourse to many who had been neglected. Napoleon agreed to the proposal to send to Prince Eugène, to act as his guide and supporter, General Macdonald, one of the most intrepid men who ever appeared in our armies, experienced, shrewd, cold, and knowing how to make himself obeyed.'

Thus, after five years of inaction and disgrace, Macdonald found the door opening before him which he had considered as irrevocably closed.

IV.

On his arrival in Italy, Macdonald met with nothing but bad news. The campaign had scarcely begun, and Prince Eugène had already allowed himself to be beaten at Sacilio by the Archduke John, who, conquered at Hohenlinden, now took his revenge. Along the road between Milan and Verona, Macdonald met with none but terror-stricken people, incapable of giving him any precise information. At Verona 'all was in confusion. The wounded were coming in in large

numbers, as well as fugitives, riderless horses, carts, baggage-waggons, carriages, crossing each other, blocking the streets, and filling the squares —in short, all the horrors of a rout.'

The Viceroy was still at Vicenza; he received Macdonald with effusion. The latter comforted him, and advised him to summon without delay the Generals in whom he could repose most confidence.

'I know them already,' was the reply. 'Look here; there goes one of them with his division. He took no part whatever in the action, and is now one of the first to be off, besides giving the worst advice.'

This was General Lamarque.

The meeting took place; it was disappointing and dispiriting. Vainly did Macdonald strive to rouse their courage; there was nothing for it but to retreat to the Adige. The Archduke, however, did not profit by his victory; his slow, almost timid march gave a respite to the French army, which recovered and reorganized itself, and repaired its losses.

It counted in its ranks many men who had formerly belonged to the Army of Naples. These had hailed Macdonald's arrival with joy, and their confidence soon spread to their comrades. But on what footing was he in this army? As a matter of fact he ought to have been chief of the general staff, but the post was occupied by General

Vignolle, a good officer, upon whom the Viceroy would have been loath to inflict pain. Prince Eugène was good, intelligent, very brave, but inexperienced, afraid of his responsibility and bowed down by the weight of his command; he needed a mentor, and realized the fact; the Emperor sent him one; he accepted him ungrudgingly, without *arrière pensée*, with gratitude. The mentor was frank even to rudeness, but frankness was also one of the Prince's qualities. In order to make for Macdonald a post worthy of him, he put him in command of a corps formed of two divisions of infantry and of a brigade of light cavalry. On every occasion he took his advice, not that he always followed it in its entirety. Macdonald exhorted, urged him to greater enterprises, but he, still haunted by the memory of Sacilio, began well, then hesitated, lost heart, and stopped altogether. The enemy, on their side, displayed no less hesitation; on either side news from Germany was anxiously awaited. That was where the great stakes were being played for, which must be decisive; in Italy the game was of interest, but inferior in importance.

One day, while out on a reconnaissance, Macdonald perceived in the distance, behind the Austrian lines, a great stir among the baggage and waggons.

'We have been victorious in Germany,' said he to the Prince; 'the enemy are retiring.'

He saw what was true. It was the result of Eckmühl and Ratisbon. The French took the offensive; the Piave was crossed by force of arms, and a severe struggle followed, at the close of which Macdonald hastened to the Prince, and said:

'See! The enemy's right wing is beating a hasty retreat. I am going to cut it off, and to-night I will make you a present of 10,000 prisoners. Go to the left, make a feint as if to stop their movement, while I bring up the right.'

'We parted,' continues Macdonald, 'in a more amicable frame of mind, but it did not last long; for scarcely had he ordered the left to advance when a few cannon-shot stopped him, and he sent orders to the centre and to the right to stop too. Thus we lost our chance. He told me that the enemy seemed inclined to defend themselves, and that he was unwilling to risk his army. Vainly did I point out to him that the fire was already slackening, and that its only object had been to cover the retreat of the right wing. He would pay no heed.

'"In that case," I said, "I shall take no further responsibility. You are in command; give your orders and I will carry them out."

'Next day I accompanied the Prince to the town of Conegliano, where one of the principal officials said to him:

'"Ah, your Highness! had you but pushed forward two squadrons you could have cut off the entire right wing of the Austrians. They were fleeing pell-mell in hopeless confusion, and the stampede lasted all night."

'The Prince looked at me regretfully. My only answer was a smile.'

After leaving Udine the army was divided. The bulk, under the command of the Viceroy, was to follow the Archduke John's tracks through Carinthia, and Macdonald, detached with his corps, was to operate in Istria, Carniola, and Styria, to take Goritz and Trieste, and to support the march of General Marmont, who was bringing back the Army of Dalmatia from Ragusa. He had an absolutely free hand, and, to use a common expression, *carte blanche*. His operations were all crowned with success. Fortune had reserved a special favour for him at Laybach, where there was an entrenched camp which could not be forced for want of artillery. He therefore limited himself to demonstrations of a more or less threatening character, and prepared to leave by night the unsurmounted obstacle, when at ten o'clock at night a *parlementaire* brought him the capitulation of the place.

'You are doing wisely,' said Macdonald with the utmost gravity; 'I was just going to sound the attack.'

A few days later he rejoined Prince Eugène

and the bulk of the Army of Italy at Gratz. He had taken more than 10,000 men, 100 guns, flags, arms, and an immense quantity of stores and ammunition. The Emperor, through the Viceroy, expressed to him his satisfaction.

The only serious drawbacks he had met with during his march arose much less from the resistance of the enemy or from the difficulties of the ground than from the malevolence of some of his officers. He had noticed, even in the first attacks, that they were feebly conducted. He decided thenceforward to direct them in person, and to watch closely to see that his orders were carried out. The chief of the cabal was one of his Generals of Division—Lamarque; the second was General Broussier, a well-intentioned man, but so weak in mind and ideas as to allow himself to be led by the former. Lamarque had induced him to believe that the Emperor had only recalled Macdonald to active service in order to complete his ruin, and that all who served under him would be at least excluded from all favour or promotion, even if they escaped utter disgrace. It became necessary to put a stop to these attempts at insubordination, and two days before the capitulation of Laybach, Macdonald administered a severe and public reprimand to Lamarque, threatening to arrest and send to the Emperor anyone who did not obey orders on the spot. 'Thenceforward,' he tells us, 'my gentlemen did

no more than mutter, but that did not trouble me.'

Shortly before reaching Gratz, Macdonald learned the sad results of the two days of Essling, but he heard at the same time that the Emperor had not lost heart. Orders came to him to leave a detachment in observation before the fort of Gratz, and to follow, with the larger portion of his troops, Prince Eugène into Hungary. He was in reserve at Papa, but aroused by the sound of distant firing, he took upon himself to march straight for the cannon, and did rightly, for when he had advanced a third of the way he met one of the Viceroy's officers riding at full speed to summon him to the battle-field of Raab. Could his troops come up in time, even by dint of forced marches? He galloped forward:

'Ah!' cried the Prince when he saw him; 'I was very wrong to leave you at Papa; you would have been very useful to us in this critical situation.'

'Take comfort,' was the answer; 'here is my *corps d'armée*.'

In spite of the Prince's anxiety the battle was already more than half gained. The sight of the reinforcement completed the enemy's dismay, and they retreated during the night to Komorn. The French followed, but they had not the means indispensable for taking such a stronghold, and all their attempts to destroy the bridge across the

Danube proved unavailing. At length orders reached the Army of Italy to join at Vienna the enormous assemblage of forces which had been gradually converging thither owing to the genius and perseverance of the Emperor. After a march of sixty leagues in three days, it arrived, at nine at night on July 4, at the headquarters of Ebersdorf. During the historical storm which raged on that famous night, it crossed to the island of Lobau.

On July 5, at six o'clock in the morning, the troops, warmed by a brilliant sun, spread themselves out like a fan upon the left bank of the Danube. The Army of Italy was at first in the second line; the Emperor passed before it, saluting with his hand, but without addressing a word to anyone. Prince Eugène, who was behind, rode up.

'Well,' he said gaily, 'I hope you were satisfied. No doubt he confirmed by word of mouth all that I have written to you.'

'He did not say a single word to me.'

'What?'

'Not a word. He merely nodded, as if to say, "I can see through you, you rascal!"'

The kind Prince was miserable. The day passed in marches, deployments, skirmishes, on the part of the vanguard. In the afternoon the Army of Italy was called into the front rank, opposite Wagram and Baumersdorf; a stream,

with steep banks—the Russbach—separated it from the enemy's positions. The cannonade was brisk, when the Emperor suddenly appeared, and said to the Viceroy:

'Order General Macdonald to attack and carry the plateau. The enemy are retiring, and we must make some prisoners.'

He went away again. Macdonald had overheard.

'The Emperor is mistaken,' he said to the Prince; 'the enemy are not leaving, they are simply retiring to the entrenched position they have selected for the battle. In order to carry through such an undertaking, although we have but an hour of daylight left, we should need to attack with the whole army. Carry or else send these remarks of mine to the Emperor.'

'Not I! He ordered us to attack; let us do it!'

'So be it; but you will see how we shall be beaten.'

The attack was made accordingly, with some preliminary success; but after climbing the slopes to the plateau they found such a large force that they had to descend again. Night had fallen, the retreat became a rout; fortunately the enemy did not pursue, and thus finished this skirmish.

Next day, at dawn, the cannonade commenced. The Army of Italy was placed, as on the foregoing day, between Bernadotte's Saxon corps on its left

and Davoût's French corps on its right. The latter was the first to be engaged. The Emperor came up, and, this time addressing himself directly to Macdonald, said:

'Last night you carried the plateau of Wagram; you know the way up to it: carry it again. Marmont will at the same time attack the village of Baumersdorf; you and he seem to understand each other. I will send him to you.'

Marmont arrived, and the two laid their plans; but while they were preparing for their simultaneous attack the Emperor had already altered Macdonald's destination. The battle was going badly on the extreme left, along the Danube, where Masséna, with only four divisions, had to bear the brunt of the attack of 60,000 Austrians manœuvring to reach the bridges crossing to the island of Lobau. If they succeeded, the French army, driven back to the river without possibility of retreat, might be surrounded and taken in the plain of Marchfeld. Warned of this dangerous movement, the Emperor had hastened to denude the centre in order to reinforce the left; and to redress the centre, already weakened by the rout of the Saxon troops, he summoned Macdonald. Every moment orderly officers arrived to hasten his march. The Emperor was on a hillock, whence he was suddenly seen to descend at full speed. Macdonald quickly took his place, and at a glance grasped the motive for his pre-

cipitate retreat. The Austrians were advancing in dense masses, with nothing in front of them. A few hundred yards more and they would cut the French army in half.

Macdonald first sent forward four battalions at the double, then four more; he deployed them in two lines, and then, to support the front, formed up the remainder of his divisions in two solid columns, like pillars, and, as it were, on the threshold he placed a portion of Nansouty's squadrons that had been put under his orders that morning. Meanwhile, on his left, a hundred cannon, belonging to the Guard—his own men—and to the Bavarian corps, drew up in line by command of General Drouot, and opened a terrible fire on the enemy. The Austrians, however, continued to advance, replying with their artillery, and summoning their numerous cavalry to charge. Macdonald had barely time to close his second line on the first one, to order the right and left columns to form squares, and from three sides of this imposing formation the firing commenced. The Austrians charged almost on to the French bayonets; they were broken everywhere, the firing ceased, and the advance continued. To complete and ensure success a large body of French cavalry should have been pushed forward. Nansouty was too slow in his formations; other squadrons, visible in the distance, did not stir. Macdonald was in despair. Close at hand he

saw a large number of abandoned pieces of cannon; these were being hastily removed by their drivers, whom the Austrian officers brought up to their task by dint of blows with the flat of their swords. Nansouty arrived at length too late; but, nevertheless, Macdonald's splendid manœuvre had produced its effect, and it was now the turn of the Archduke Charles to find his centre broken, disorganized, and repulsed in disorder.

While Nansouty was doing his best to make up for lost time, Macdonald ordered a halt to reform his somewhat straggling ranks while waiting for reinforcements. A General, whom he did not know, and to whom he was a stranger, came to him in order to express his admiration for him. They gave each other their names; the newcomer was General Walther, of the Guard.

'Are you,' asked Macdonald, 'in command of that fine and large body of cavalry which I perceive in the rear?'

'I am.'

'Then why in the world did you not charge the enemy at the decisive moment? The Emperor ought to, and will, be very angry at the inaction of his cavalry.'

'In the Guard,' was the reply, 'we require orders direct from the Emperor himself, or from our chief, Marshal Bessières. Now, as the latter

was wounded, there only remained the Emperor, and he sent us no orders.'

'I afterwards learned,' adds Macdonald, 'that the Emperor had treated him and the other Generals of the Guard very severely indeed, but the fault really lay with the Emperor himself; he should not have forgotten the restriction he had imposed.'

The reinforcements arrived, consisting of General Wrede's Bavarian division and the light cavalry of the Guard. Macdonald started afresh in pursuit of the Austrians. At the village of Süssenbrünn he succeeded in cutting off their rear-guard and in making an important capture—five or six thousand men and ten guns—but a strong reserve, posted on a height, offered an obstinate resistance. Night had come on. The continued firing and the flames of the burning village lightening the horizon surprised the Emperor, who sent to make inquiries. The whole army had received orders to bivouac at five o'clock, but, through an oversight, this order had not been conveyed to Macdonald. His men passed the night under arms, and he himself, having received a kick from his horse during the day, lay down on a truss of straw in a ruinous cottage.

He was still stretched next morning on this hard couch, when an orderly officer came from the Emperor to fetch him. He could not walk and had no horse, as his had been wounded; the

officer gave him his. The Emperor, followed by a numerous staff, was surrounded by soldiers, whom he was congratulating, and who were cheering him. On seeing Macdonald he went towards him, embraced him warmly, and, not forgetting his Corneille, said:

'Let us be friends.'

Augustus had spoken. Macdonald, who had never played Cinna, replied:

'Till death!'

'You have behaved valiantly,' continued the Emperor, 'and have rendered me the greatest services, as, indeed, throughout the entire campaign. On the battle-field of your glory, where I owe you so large a part of yesterday's success, I make you a Marshal of France. You have long deserved it.'

'Sire, since you are satisfied with us, let the rewards be apportioned among my army corps, beginning with Generals Lamarque and Broussier.'

'Anything you please; I have nothing to refuse you.'

Thus did Macdonald avenge himself for all the annoyances caused him by Lamarque, who none the less continued to grumble and intrigue, but of whom he succeeded in getting rid some little time later.

Scarcely had the Emperor turned away than his gilded staff pressed around the new Marshal.

Eugène Charpentier del. Paul Girardet sc.

MARSHAL MACDONALD
DUKE OF TARENTUM

Paris, for Richard Bentley and Son 1892

Printed by Ch. Wittmand Paris.

Embraces and handshakings followed, 'that I thought would never end. Many would have passed me by had it not been for the Emperor's favour.' Such were the reflections of the victorious philosopher. His first visit and his first thanks were for Prince Eugène. With unfeigned joy they threw themselves into each other's arms.

A few days later an armistice was concluded, and Macdonald received orders to return into Styria and take up his headquarters at Gratz. As he passed Vienna he went to pay his respects to the Emperor.

'I found at Schönbrunn a country and people which were alike new to me—I mean the Imperial Court, which greeted me very coldly,' he tells us.

The truth probably was that the Emperor was very busy that morning, and received him carelessly. However, he retained him to breakfast with Berthier and Marmont, who had just been made a Marshal together with Oudinot. While they were at table, a despatch from Vandamme was brought to the Emperor. This General, who commanded the Wurtemberg corps, had been sent forward to Gratz, of which he was to take possession until Macdonald could arrive. He announced that on the road he had met an Austrian force which, as it belonged to the Archduke John's army, refused to recognise the armistice, where-

upon a suspension of arms had been provisionally agreed to until the arrival of fresh orders. After breakfast the Emperor received a large number of general officers and others who had come to pay their respects.

'Where is your force?' he asked Macdonald aloud. 'Hasten its march—start in person. I put Vandamme under your orders. Take entire direction of everything; march against that army and crush it!'

'However,' adds the Marshal, 'while I was taking my leave he whispered to me:

'"Be prudent; try not to renew hostilities; we need rest in order to recover ourselves."'

Vandamme was very dissatisfied; after handing over the command to Macdonald he began to rage violently against the new Marshals, Oudinot and Marmont.

'He was good enough to admit,' says Macdonald ironically, 'that I had earned the distinction,' and then he proceeded to attack the Emperor himself, who, according to what he said, had early in the campaign promised that he should be a Marshal and a Duke before three months were over.

'He is a coward!' he went on; 'a forger, a liar! Had it not been for me, Vandamme, he would still be keeping pigs in Corsica.'

This was said in presence of about thirty Generals and superior officers, for the most part,

moreover, Wurtembergers, foreigners! He was pacified and quieted with difficulty.

It became necessary to come to some understanding with this Austrian force that was stopping the way. Although the Archduke Charles bore the title of Generalissimo, his brother John refused to recognise his supreme authority, and tried to avoid carrying out the terms of the armistice. Macdonald showed himself firm and even threatening, but he was not obliged to proceed to extremities, as the Austrians were intimidated and retired into Croatia, while he himself entered Gratz without a blow. The Archduke John obtained nothing by his attempts at independence; he was compelled, willy-nilly, to recognise the validity of the armistice; and finally, after long and wearisome negotiations, peace was concluded at Vienna.

After the ratifications had been exchanged, the Emperor returned to Paris, and Prince Eugène to Milan. Macdonald took command of the Army of Italy; on August 15 he received the Grand Cordon of the Legion of Honour, the title of Duke of Tarentum, and a present of 60,000 francs (£2,400). Generals Lamarque and Broussier were made Knights Commanders (*Grands Officiers*) of the Legion, and numerous rewards were distributed among the Marshal's former corps.

When the moment arrived for evacuating the provinces restored to Austria (by the terms of the

treaty of Vienna) a deputation from the States of Styria, recognising the pains Macdonald had taken to spare their country and maintain exemplary discipline among his troops, came to offer him a considerable sum of money as a present. He refused, and as they insisted, said :

'Well, if you really think you owe me anything, I can tell you how to acquit your debt in a manner more worthy of me. Look after the sick and wounded whom I am obliged to leave here for the time being, as well as the detachment and the medical officers of whom they have charge.'*

* About this time I learned a fact which will create no surprise, as it affords another proof of the chivalrous disinterestedness of Macdonald's character. When in 1815 several Marshals claimed from the allied Powers their endowments in foreign countries, Madame Moreau, to whom the King had given the honorary title of *Madame la Maréchale*, and who was the friend of the Duke of Tarentum, wrote, without Macdonald's knowledge, to M. de Blacas, our ambassador at Naples, begging him to endeavour to preserve for the Marshal the endowment which had been given him in the kingdom of Naples. As soon as Macdonald was informed of this circumstance he waited upon Madame Moreau, thanked her for her kind intentions, but at the same time informed her that he should disavow all knowledge of her letter, as the request it contained was entirely adverse to his principles. The Marshal did, in fact, write the following letter to M. de Blacas : 'I hasten to inform you, sir, that it was not with my consent that Madame Moreau wrote to you, and I beg you will take no step that might expose me to a refusal. The King of Naples owes me no recompense for having beaten his army, revolutionized his kingdom, and forced him to retire to Sicily.' Such conduct was well worthy of the man who was the last to forsake

V.

In the month of April, 1810, a few days after the marriage of the Emperor with the Archduchess Marie Louise, Macdonald was appointed Governor-General of Catalonia. He disliked the way in which war was carried on in Spain; the enemy were ubiquitous, and yet to be found nowhere. The larger portion of his troops, moreover, were in Arragon, at the disposal of General Suchet. The campaign of 1810, therefore, was devoid, for him, of interest or importance; the same might have been said for that of the following year had it not been for the surprise of Figueras by the Spaniards and the siege, or rather blockade, of the town, which afterwards ensued. When Cæsar wrote his 'Commentaries,' he certainly never imagined that he would furnish a valuable model to one of Napoleon's lieutenants, and yet such was the case. 'I remembered the siege of Alesia, and caused analogous works to be made.'

Napoleon in 1814, and the last to rejoin him, and that without the desire of accepting any appointment, in 1815. M. de Blacas, who was himself much surprised at Macdonald's letter, communicated it to the King of Naples, whose answer deserves to be recorded. It was as follows: 'If I had not imposed a law upon myself to acknowledge none of the French endowments, the conduct of Marshal Macdonald would have induced me to make an exception in his favour.' It is gratifying to see princes such scrupulous observers of the laws they make for themselves!—*From Bourrienne's 'Napoleon,'* vol. iii., p. 400.

The place yielded at length, and the Marshal brought away from it a melancholy recollection by which he was often haunted afterwards. It was before the walls of Figueras that he had his first, and very violent, attack of gout. When he received his recall to France he could only walk upon crutches.

His health was not re-established when, in April, 1812, he was called to take his share in the Russian campaign. He gladly rose to the occasion.

'I had left,' he says, 'my armchair in the fortress at Figueras; I left one crutch in Paris and the other in Berlin.'

With the exception of one French division, his army corps, the 10th, consisted of foreigners, of the Prussian contingent, made up of two divisions of infantry with a brigade of light cavalry, and of a mixed division, consisting of three Polish regiments, one Bavarian, and one Westphalian regiment. The general staff was French.

Macdonald crossed the Niemen with the entire Grand Army on June 24, then broke off from it, and occupied, on the extreme left, a position of observation and expectation on the coasts of the Baltic, near the mouth of the Dwina. After having taken possession of the *tête-de-pont** of Dunaburg, he waited long and vainly for fresh instructions. He only received them eventually

* *Vide inf.*, p. 171, note.

from Wilna, that is to say, at the end of the disastrous retreat from Moscow, and then not from the Emperor but from Murat, who was trying to collect together the last remains of the Grand Army.

These orders were to fall back upon Tilsit, and the partial retreat began on December 19. All went well at first; the troops were rested, well fed, warmly clad in sheepskin pelisses. The 10th corps reached the Niemen, feebly harassed by the Russians; the rearguard, composed of the larger portion of the Prussian contingent, and commanded by General Yorck, had, until then, scrupulously followed the bulk of the army at a distance of one day's march; at Tilsit Macdonald spent five days in vainly waiting for them; he sent out for news in all directions; nothing was to be heard of General Yorck; his absence seemed to have been pre-arranged. Macdonald had certainly noticed a marked increase of coldness in the General's recent letters, but he never suspected his conduct. The staff were in favour of continuing the retreat without further delay; the Russians had already crossed the Niemen, and might at any moment cut off the road to Königsberg.

'Had I been less confident in other people's honour,' writes Macdonald, 'the attitude of the Prussians who were with me would have opened my eyes to what was going on around me. Far

from being uneasy at the fate of the rear-guard, they seemed not to trouble about it.'

But, as on the Trebbia he had feared, if he retired, that he might be accused of abandoning Moreau, so on the Niemen he did not wish that anyone should say he had deserted his rear-guard. 'I declared positively that my life, my career, should never be stained with the reproach that I had committed the cowardly action of deserting troops confided to my care.' His loyalty nearly cost him dear.

Symptoms of insubordination had appeared among the Prussians; they were becoming arrogant and exacting; they demanded a share of the money raised in Courland. One morning at daybreak—it was the 31st of December — Marion, Colonel of Engineers, came to the Marshal, thinking that he had news of General Yorck. Upon receiving an answer in the negative from his chief, he continued: 'I fancied you had; for as, in accordance with your orders, I was testing the ice, I saw all the Prussians rapidly recrossing the Niemen. I thought you had sent them to meet the rear-guard. General Massenbach, as he passed, gave me these two letters for you.'

'Heavens!' exclaimed the Marshal, 'we are betrayed, perhaps given up; but we will sell our lives dearly.'

Yorck had deserted. On the previous day he had entered into an engagement with the Russian

General, Diebitch. Here is a dry fragment from his letter to Macdonald :

'I am not uneasy as to the judgment that may be passed by the world upon my conduct. It is dictated by my duty towards my troops, and after lengthy reflection. I am guided by the purest motives, no matter how they may appear.'

Massenbach's letter displayed more emotion.

'Your Excellency will forgive me for not having come in person to warn you of this step. It was in order to spare myself feelings very painful to my heart, for the sentiments of respect and esteem that I bear to the person of your Excellency, and that I shall retain till the end of my days, are such that they would have prevented me from doing my duty.'

There was at headquarters an escort troop, furnished by the Prussian cavalry. In the hurry of their desertion, the Prussians had omitted to give them warning.

'The officer commanding them came to me in the morning, and, from his calm appearance and manner, it was easy to see that he suspected nothing of what had happened. He could not speak French, but I caused an account of what had passed to be related to him in German. He turned pale, and shed tears of indignation, and wished to remain with and follow us. I told him to call his men to horse, thanked his detachment for their zeal, fidelity, and attachment, gave them 600

francs (£24) out of my own pocket, and the same to the officer for a horse, and, despite their entreaties, sent them to join their compatriots.'

These men, at any rate, did their best to save what remained of honour among the Prussians

The assembly was sounded. French, Poles, Westphalians, Bavarians—4,000 or 5,000 men at the outside—hastily came together; they marched for twenty-two hours without stopping, through rain, through water, through darkest night, and at length succeeded in gaining the forest of Bömwald at six o'clock in the morning. During the day the rear-guard had been harassed by a slight and intermittent cannonade.

At length they reached Königsberg, where was a body of conscripts just arrived from France. Macdonald there united all his troops, and continued his retreat to Elbing, where he found the King of Naples, who ordered him to go to Dantzic, to leave there all his troops under General Rapp, governor of the town, and to go in person to the principal headquarters, there to await fresh orders.

Murat was in haste to return to Naples; he started at once, without even informing the Emperor, and left the command to Prince Eugène. At Dantzic Macdonald made over his troops to General Rapp. The separation was painful; leader and soldiers, almost all foreigners, had become bound to each other by a mutual affection

that had been daily rendered keener and more sincere by perils faced together, by privations and fatigues shared in common.

Where were the headquarters? No one at Dantzic knew. Macdonald went first to Berlin, and there learned that they were at Posen. He wrote, and, in answer, received orders to betake himself straightway to Paris.

VI.

When he entered the Emperor's presence, the latter started, and said not a word; the Marshal was indignant, left the room, and vowed he would never go to Court again. A few days later, however, he was recalled by order. The Emperor admitted to him that he had been deceived concerning him; he had been falsely accused of provoking the Prussian defection by his excessive severity. Napoleon and Macdonald had begun their warlike career at the same time; they must finish it together, for the campaign now about to open was to be the last. Thus spoke the Emperor.

On April 10, 1813, Macdonald was appointed Commander-in-chief of the 11th corps of the Grand Army. This corps was composed of three divisions of infantry and a brigade of light cavalry. Two-thirds of the infantry were French, the remainder being composed of Westphalians, Hessians, Italians, and Neapolitans; the cavalry

was Italian. So Macdonald was fated to have Neapolitans under his command!

The very day after his arrival at headquarters he had to storm Merseburg, defended by General Yorck; the attack and defence were, consequently, of the most determined character. Merseburg was carried on April 29, and three days later was fought the battle of Lutzen.

During the early part of the day the 11th corps had operated towards Leipsic, because the Emperor was at first fully convinced that the chief forces of the enemy were in that direction; but as the firing grew more violent on the right, and the corps of Ney had to bear the whole brunt of the battle, Macdonald was hastily recalled. He came up at the double, disengaged Ney, and, with his squares, withstood the repeated charges made by the Russian and Prussian Guards. Unfortunately the Emperor had not, as yet, sufficient cavalry to retaliate; he had only a few squadrons, which he watched and tended as a last and almost only resource. The victory of Lutzen belonged exclusively to the infantry and artillery.

The enemy did not remain at Dresden, and when they retired they blew up the greater part of the bridge over the Elbe. Macdonald, who had the honour of leading the vanguard, caused ladders to be thrown across the dilapidated arches; his infantry crossed, and then, by the

help of the engineers, even the artillery. One morning, believing himself followed by the rest of the army, he found himself face to face with the enemy in full force. In order to deceive them, he drew up his lines in imitation of a spider's web, to make use of his descriptive expression; but the day seemed long to him. When night came he lighted large fires among his lines. Two more days thus passed, and at last the army came to his support. The 11th corps took an honourable share in the days of fighting that bear the name of the battle of Bautzen; and when at last an armistice was concluded, he went into cantonments in Silesia, in the district of Löwenberg.

The Congress of Prague was, as is well known, a deception and a pretence. Negotiations were broken off, Prussia and Russia once more took the field, but not alone this time; they were aided by Austria and Sweden—the coalition was complete. In Silesia, hostilities were renewed by the allies themselves, even before the expiration of the armistice. The Emperor hastened up, drove back Blücher, turned again rapidly, and swept both Austrians and Russians from Dresden. This was the last flash, not of his genius, but of his fortune. The victory of Dresden was gained on August 27, and three days later Vandamme was crushed at Kulm, in the Töplitz Pass, between two hostile bodies. On the 23rd Marshal Oudinot had been beaten at Gross-Beeren, on the road to

Berlin; and, finally, on the 26th, Macdonald had met with a serious check on the Katzbach.

In order to be able to hold his own against Blücher, the Emperor had joined to his own army corps Ney's force (provisionally commanded by General Souham), that of General Lauriston, and General Sebastiani's reserve cavalry. Blücher had established himself on the heights above Jauer. Macdonald sent orders to Souham, who was in the neighbourhood of Liegnitz, to turn the right of the Prussians, while, with the 11th corps and that of Lauriston, he himself would attack them in front and on the left. Rain had fallen unceasingly since the previous day, the ground was soaked, the slope steep, and the only road that the cavalry could follow not more than fifteen feet wide. Sebastiani had moved all his artillery thither; with great difficulty they were brought to the summit, when the guns became embedded in mud up to the axles, and it was impossible to move them. Meanwhile, the infantry mounted to the right and left; but the rain wetted the pans of their muskets, and the priming would not ignite. Souham, on his side, had failed in his movement. For the same reasons the volleys of the enemy's infantry were not redoubtable; but the Prussian artillery, long since in position, kept up a continuous fire, and the cavalry, posted on the summit, charged all who attempted to gain a footing there. There was nothing for it but

to descend again, to retreat by night through the darkness, across overflowing streams and through ravines that had become torrents. The scattered columns marched in disorder, leaving laggards and exhausted men along the road. In a word, it was a flight and a rout.

I know that it is not fitting to quote one's own writings, but nevertheless I ask leave to reproduce here a passage written elsewhere, at a time when I little thought that I should have to occupy myself with Macdonald or to study him closely:

'Had the battle of the Katzbach been fought by grown men and trained soldiers, it need not perhaps have been lost; it would have been at the worst a reparable check; fought as it was with soldiers of yesterday and with men too young, it was the beginning of a disaster. On the other hand, never was there a better proof of the value of physical and moral energy, of the resistance of body and soul to the injuries of time, to hunger, to thirst, to all the miseries of war—that stoicism, in short, which military education produces, not all at once, but little by little, and which is, after all, nothing but a feeling of honour and duty in its highest expression. Evidence is not wanting concerning this battle of the Katzbach; but no more authoritative witness, none more convincing and sincere, exists than Marshal Macdonald. One feels that one is confronting an honest man,

who does not attribute to himself the right, and who is not even tempted to disguise truth or conceal anything. Thus does truth become a power, and history a profitable study.'*

On August 29 the Marshal wrote from Bunzlau to the Major-General:

'The enemy have pursued but feebly, but their light cavalry, the bugbear of fugitives, has appeared on all sides with cannon. Our troops are in a pitiable condition, having been drenched with rain during four-and-twenty consecutive hours, marching through mud up to their knees, and crossing overflowing torrents. Such being the state of affairs, the Generals cannot prevent the men from seeking shelter, as their muskets are useless to them.'

On the same day, a few hours later, he wrote:

'I grieve to have to inform you that the rain has caused a series of disasters which go to my heart. The Puthod division no longer exists; what remained of it was carried away this evening by the floods at Löwenberg before it was possible to provide a means of crossing for the men. I will try to-morrow to keep together the lines on the Bober, but I cannot reunite my forces until we are behind the Queiss. His Majesty is in possession of the circumstances; I could neither forecast nor rule the elements; they are the cause of all our misfortunes, for the check

* 'La Grande Armée de 1813,' 2nd edit., p. 136 *et seq.*

received by our cavalry was slight when compared with the strength of the army, and would have been easily repaired had it not been for a continual downpour of three days and nights. I have not as yet been able to discover the exact total of our losses, or the number of fighting-men remaining to us.'

As it turned out the losses were inconsiderable; fugitives, laggards, and isolated men, who had fallen out, rejoined daily in great numbers. When, on September 4, the Emperor reached Bautzen with his Guard and his reserves, he was much surprised at finding the troops rested, reorganized, and asking nothing better than to be led against the enemy. He gave Macdonald public tokens of the greatest esteem, and desired him to retain general command of the four corps; then, in accordance with their desire, he led them against the enemy, who declined the combat. After alternations of marches and counter-marches, through the month of September, Macdonald was ordered to draw towards Dresden.

One morning an orderly officer came to him charged by the Emperor to ask his opinion as to what, under the circumstances, ought to be done. Macdonald pointed to his men dying of hunger, the army, unprovided with victuals or ammunition, growing weaker day by day. Under these unfavourable conditions, the wisest plan would be to evacuate the places on the Oder and the Elbe,

to leave a strong garrison at Leipsic, and to retire behind the Saale. The officer was alarmed at the idea of having to carry such unpalatable advice to the Emperor.

'Go,' said Macdonald; 'the Emperor will realize the importance of what I say, and will be pleased with me for my outspokenness.'

Some hours later the messenger returned; the Emperor, who was in his bath, had sent for him, listened with great attention to his report, and said nothing except that the Saale was not a good defensive position, and that there was none better than the Rhine.

'We will go to the Rhine. Go and tell the Marshal so.'

Macdonald could scarcely credit so much wisdom. Scarcely, however, had the officer left him, when another one came up, bringing orders to march immediately, not to the west, towards the Rhine, but in the diametrically opposite direction, towards the enemy. Macdonald started, leaving, somewhat behind his infantry, his heavy ordnance on the summit of a hill.

The enemy occupied the heights of Bischofswerda; far away, on the right, a thin line of their cavalry was visible. During the first onslaught Macdonald received a summons from the Emperor, and found him on the hill where his artillery was, helping to lay it in position, and himself pushing with the gunners.

'What are you going to fire at?' asked the Marshal.

'At that line of cavalry down there in front of us.'

'But it is out of range!'

'Never mind!'

At the seventeenth shot the Emperor gave the order to cease firing, and, taking Macdonald aside, said:

'You were surprised at my firing?'

'Yes, because that cavalry was out of range, and was not worth powder and shot.'

'That may be; but you see that with every volley one hits something, it may be a man of mark. Look at Moreau—a spent shot killed him at Dresden; look at Bessières or Duroc.'

A fatalistic idea!

They had now reached the middle of October; the enemy only displayed a few scouts, but it was at least probable, if not evident, that they were manœuvring to turn the Emperor. Macdonald warned him of this. Next day he received orders to make first for Wittenberg, and then to fall back upon Leipsic. He reached the latter place late in the day of October 16 (the first day of the battle), but still early enough to carry at the point of the bayonet a position known as the Swedish Redoubt.

The story of the battle of, and retreat from, Leipsic has been told a hundred times; I know

no account of it that is more stirring, more heartrending, than that given by Macdonald. What strikes one principally is the Emperor's attitude. He seems like a man who has received a heavy blow on the head, or who has just had a serious fall. He is giddy, amazed, exhausted; and that condition, it will be seen, will continue until he once more treads French soil, when, like Antæus, he will recover the power, the lucidity, the activity, the genius of his youth. To his immortal Italian campaigns we will add, as a *pendant*, his successes in Champagne—overwhelming, indeed, but, alas! how useless! I will give some proofs of what I have ventured to put forward.

On the last day of the battle, October 19, the very morning of the retreat, Macdonald, driven back to the boulevards of Leipsic, suddenly received orders to send help to Marshal Augereau on his right. He had scarcely force enough to hold his own against the enemy, but nevertheless he detaches a brigade from the Hessian division. After the lapse of half an hour this brigade reappears. Having gone whither it was ordered, it had found neither friends nor enemies; and then, mounting the ramparts, it follows the example set the previous day by Reynier's Saxons, and from its coign of vantage fires on the French troops!

'In the preceding year,' Macdonald cries in-

dignantly, 'when the Prussians deserted, they had at least the decency not to turn and fire upon us.'

Next day, amid the disorder of the retreat, he chanced to meet Augereau, and asked him for an explanation of what had occurred when he received orders to send help to a comrade. Here is Augereau's answer:

'That idiot does not know what he is about! Have you not already noticed that? Have you not observed that he has completely lost his head in these recent events, and in the catastrophe by which they have been followed? The coward! He abandoned, and was prepared to sacrifice us all; and do you suppose that I am fool enough to let myself be killed or made prisoner for the sake of a Leipsic suburb? You should have done as I did, and have gone away.'

When, on a former occasion, Vandamme abused Napoleon, it was at any rate after a victory, after Wagram.

Since the previous day Macdonald had had opportunities of judging for himself the Emperor's state of mind. The Marshal had nearly perished, like Poniatowski, drowned in the Elster; he had just come three leagues on foot, dripping with water and shivering, in order to gain the principal headquarters at Markranstadt. He arrives; finds the Emperor seated at a table, his eyes fixed on a map, his head resting upon his

hand, the room full of Generals and officers. Macdonald, in tears—yes, actually in tears—gives an account of all that he has just witnessed; his men, on the other bank of the Elster, unable to cross, calling to him, imploring his help. 'Monsieur le Maréchal, save your soldiers! Save your children!' What a scene! All who heard him are moved; the Emperor alone is untouched. 'Go and rest,' is his only remark. Not another word does he say. 'I left him, indignant at his indifference,' adds Macdonald. Was it really indifference? No, it was exhaustion!

Some days later, at Erfurt, the Emperor sent for him. On reaching the castle Murat cautioned him that Napoleon's intention was to order him to find a strong defensive position, where he could make a halt for five or six days.

'You had better find a weak one,' added Murat, with an oath, 'or he will not rest till he has lost himself and us, too.'

'Never fear,' answered the Marshal; 'even if the position be excellent, I will tell him my mind about our situation.'

On entering, the Emperor gave him the commission of which Murat had warned him.

'Is your Majesty in earnest in talking of remaining here? In our present state of disorganization, or demoralisation, as I must call things by their proper names, you will gain nothing by it. We must get to the Rhine as fast as possible; the

majority of the men are already in disorder, and making their way thither.'

'But yet I am told that a considerable number have been stopped, and fifteen battalions formed.'

'You are being flattered and deceived. You can now only count upon your Guard, and beware lest they be carried away by the force of example, as in the last campaign.'

Three other persons were present during this conversation, three attentive witnesses—two secretaries and the Duke of Bassano; they had all ceased writing. The latter, his pen between his teeth, his arms folded, stared in amazement and stupefaction at Macdonald. Never had he heard anyone address his master thus.

'Very good,' said the master; 'we will start to-morrow.'

'Even that will be too late.'

They started next day, and on the morning of October 30 came in sight of Hanau; General Wrede's Bavarian army barred the road. Macdonald led the advance-guard. He dislodged the enemy from a wood, from which, in his turn, he was unable to debouch; his little force, deployed in small bodies of skirmishers, formed, as they had done in old days in Silesia, the spider's web. He needed reinforcements, sent to ask for some, and received nothing. At length he decided to go in person; he had only a quarter of a league to ride. He laid clearly before the Emperor the

critical situation of the advance-guard, and the latter answered carelessly:

'What can I do? I give orders, and no one heeds them.'

'But consider that our situation is no ordinary one. You must force a passage, and send without delay all the troops at your disposal. Why has not your Guard come up? We shall be utterly done for if it does not come immediately.'

'I can't help it.'

'Formerly,' continues Macdonald, 'at a sign, a gesture, a word, all trembled around him, or he would have known the reason why!' However, the Emperor summoned the Major-General and sent forward four battalions of chasseurs, and shortly afterwards he arrived himself with his Guard.

'Can we observe the enemy's position without danger?' he inquired of the Marshal.

'Not without danger; we must risk it.'

'Very good; come along.'

'Just as we were starting a shell burst close to him, without hurting any one; straightway he stopped, dismounted from his horse, and from that moment it was impossible to get him out of the wood.'

At last, thanks to the *grenadiers à cheval* and the dragoons of the Guard, supported by a regiment of 'guards of honour,' thanks to Drouot's artillery—but why discriminate?—thanks to the

general effort made by all (for they knew that they must either conquer or die), the Bavarians were compelled to retreat. The road was freed, but Hanau, which was supposed to have been evacuated, was still occupied. It was night. A confused medley of carriages, baggage-waggons, vehicles of all kinds, emerged from the wood; at their head was visible the wavering, reddish glare of a torch. As they neared the town some reports were heard, whereupon the torch made a sudden turn to the right, described a curve, and re-entered the shelter. It was being carried before the Emperor. Next day they succeeded in crossing Hanau and gaining the Rhine.

At Mayence the Emperor sent for Macdonald and kept him to dinner. Conversation turned upon the military and political events of that fatal year. Why, at the Congress of Prague, had the Emperor refused to make the concessions desired by the allies? Was he not to retain possession of France as far as the Rhine, of Italy and the protectorate of the Helvetian Confederation?

'I did not consent,' was Napoleon's answer, 'because I feared that the allies would become more exacting, and demand still more.'

'But in that case,' said Macdonald, 'why did you, when it was unfortunately too late, end by consenting? Had you done it earlier, you would have given evidence of your desire for peace. France and the army would have been grateful to

you, and would perhaps have made greater efforts to secure it. You might have done more; you might have freed yourself with honour from the canker which is destroying your old troops in Spain and ruining your treasury, had you restored Spain to herself and her sovereign, and thereby displayed a moderation which must have struck France, your armies, and Europe.'

'That is true; but now I must retain that country as compensation.'

VII.

The campaign of 1813 was at an end; that of 1814 was about to open. Macdonald had, at first, command of the line of the Rhine from Coblentz to below Arnheim. The Emperor had promised him eighty battalions and sixty squadrons; the newspapers allotted to him a body of from 50,000 to 60,000 men; in reality, after withdrawing General Molitor's slender force from Holland, during the early days of December, he had, at most, 5,000.

'This is all the infantry we have between Nimeguen and Coblentz, and there is nothing behind us,' he wrote. 'Everywhere we are in want, and I can hear of no reinforcements; but in Paris people are living in a state of despairing security. Oh, France! my country! take all my blood, and be saved!'

After several, more or less serious, attempts and

demonstrations, the allies definitely crossed the Rhine on January 1, 1814. The Emperor quitted Paris on the 25th, never to return thither.

Pressed more and more closely by the overwhelming onslaught of the enemy, Macdonald at length reached Châlons. I do not intend to follow him through all his marches, countermarches, and combats in Champagne, on the Seine, the Aube, and the Marne; I will only select a few significant facts.

At the end of February, while the Emperor was holding in check and driving back Blücher, he had given Macdonald general command of the troops he had left behind, and had placed under his orders, together with the corps of which he already held the titulary command, those of Marshal Oudinot and General Gérard, or, in all, about 25,000 men. The mission entrusted to him was to observe and neutralize, as far as possible, the movements of the principal army of the coalition. Macdonald arrived at Troyes considerably in advance of his force, which could only follow next day; he arranged his plan of defence, one of Gérard's divisions inside the town, the other outside, and Oudinot's corps in reserve. Gérard was ordered to hold out as long as possible. The attack was made the following day, March 4. Macdonald, who was in the faubourg, learned by a report from General Grassot, chief of Oudinot's staff, that the troops were all in their appointed

places, when suddenly an officer came to warn him that the enemy, having carried the town, were entering the faubourg, and that he had not a moment to lose. The Marshal at first refused to believe it.

'All the troops are gone,' said the officer.

'By whose order?'

He had barely time to mount his horse, and, followed by his escort, to charge the enemy's scouts. When he rejoined the column, actually in retreat, he learned from Gérard that it was by order of Marshal Oudinot; and when, on reaching the bivouac that evening, he asked for an explanation from the latter, whose corps ought, according to the plan agreed upon, to have remained in reserve, he received for an answer that the Young Guard was not intended for a rear-guard! Would not one think, from this answer, that the palmy days of Wagram had returned?

'If that be so,' retorted Macdonald, 'I have no further orders to give you. Go to the Emperor for them.'

The latter, abandoning Blücher, was returning in haste against the great allied army. He summoned Macdonald and Oudinot, and they joined him at Arcis-sur-Aube, at the very moment when he was marching his troops in the direction of Vitry-sur-Marne. They found him near a camp-fire, in the square at Arcis.

'What is your motive,' asked Macdonald, 'in withdrawing your troops from here?'

'The enemy are in full retreat; I am going to cut off their communications, and they shall pay dearly for their temerity.'

'What? The enemy retreating? They are in position on the other side of the Aube. I saw considerable forces as I came along.'

'Their one idea is to recross the Rhine, and if they are still there, it is simply in order to let their train of waggons pass.'

A quarter of an hour later the enemy gave the assault. The Emperor, obstinately fixed in his idea, had already rejoined the column on the road to Vitry, and it was all the two Marshals could do to maintain their position at Arcis. Next morning they were compelled to quit it and make for the Marne. They rejoined the Emperor at St. Dizier, and he at once tried to find the allies, but without success. What had become of them? It was evident that, after some hesitation and indecision, they had taken the direction of Paris. The Emperor followed in their wake, thereby hoping to frighten and compel them to retreat. His hope was delusive; rapidly as he marched, it was impossible to get in front of them, and the feeble corps under Marmont and Mortier were utterly incapable of defending Paris successfully against such important forces.

Macdonald was in favour of staking everything upon a last throw, and, since the Emperor was

determined to advance towards the East, to go through with it.

'In your place,' said he, 'I should betake myself into Lorraine or Alsace; I would collect all the garrisons, and would wage deadly war against the enemy's rear, cutting off their communications, intercepting their supplies and reinforcements.'

The Emperor's presence in the Vosges would, of itself, have sufficed to raise thousands of good marksmen. Later on, the Czar Alexander admitted to Macdonald that, in that region, the allies lost over 3,000 men, without having seen a single French soldier. The Alsace plan produced no result, and the Emperor hastened to Paris.

'I am now coming,' says Macdonald, 'to the end of this desperate struggle—our long military and political agony is about to terminate in an overwhelming catastrophe!'

VIII.

The army was between Troyes and Villeneuve-l'Archevêque when the news arrived of the capitulation of Paris. The intelligence cast a gloom over every heart; many soldiers quitted the standards, and returned home; even the Guard lost confidence. However, rumour said that the Emperor intended to advance and retake Paris. At the last stage before Fontainebleau, General

Gérard came to Macdonald, and told him, in the name of his officers and men, that everyone was tired of the whole business, that a stop must be put to it, and that the sorrows of France were already great enough, without exposing Paris to the fate of Moscow.

Fontainebleau was reached on April 3. A letter addressed from Paris to all the Marshals had just been forwarded, open, from Essonne by Marshal Marmont, who was in command of the outposts. He had broken the seal. It was written by General Beurnonville, a member of the Provisional Government, and announced, in substance, that Paris was tranquil, that the allies would no longer treat with Napoleon, and that the English Constitution was to be given to France. Macdonald caused it to be read aloud, and then went to the palace with Marshal Oudinot, a large number of Generals, and a crowd of officers, who insisted upon following them, fearing lest the Emperor should do them some injury.

The Emperor was in his study with the Duke of Bassano, Caulaincourt, Berthier, Ney, the old Marshal Lefebvre, and some others. Macdonald and Oudinot entered. 'Here,' says Macdonald, 'began the scene which changed so many destinies. The Emperor came up to me and said:

'"Good-day, Duke of Tarentum. How are things going?"

'"Very badly; a succession of misfortunes!

To have yielded ingloriously! Without making an attempt to save Paris! We are all overwhelmed, humiliated."

'"True, it is a great misfortune! What do your troops say?"

'"That you are going to summon us to march upon the capital. I am come to declare to you, in their name, that they will not expose it to the fate of Moscow. We consider that we have done enough, and sufficiently proved our devotion, without risking an absolutely unequal attempt, which must end in losing everything. Whatever is decided upon, we have had enough of this unhappy war, without lighting the flames of civil war as well!"

'"They are mistaken," said the Emperor; "I have no thought of marching upon Paris."

'I expected that he would have exploded; but, on the contrary, his answer was made calmly and quietly. He repeated:

'"True, the loss of Paris is a great misfortune."

'"Do you know," I asked, "what is going on there?"

'"They say that the allies will not treat with me further."

'"Is that all that you know?"

'"Yes."

'"Then read this letter."

'It was that from Beurnonville; the Duke of Bassano read it aloud.

'"Well, gentlemen, since it has come to this, I will abdicate. I wished to make the happiness of France; I have not succeeded. Events have been against me. I do not desire to augment our misfortunes; but, if I abdicate, what will you do? Will you have the King of Rome as my successor and the Empress as regent?"

'We all accepted unanimously.

'"The first thing to be done," he continued, "is to treat for a suspension of arms; I shall send Commissioners to Paris. I designate for this important mission the Marshals Prince of the Moskowa, Duke of Ragusa, and Duke of Vicenza. Do you approve my choice?"

'We replied in the affirmative.

'The Emperor then said:

'"Gentlemen, you may retire. I am going to cause the Commissioners' instructions to be drawn up, but I forbid them to stipulate concerning anything personal to me."

'Then, throwing himself on to a sofa and striking his thigh, he said:

'"Nonsense, gentlemen! Let us forget all about that, and march to-morrow. We will beat them!"

'I repeated briefly what I had said upon the state of the army, and we added:

'"No, we have had enough of it; and remember that every hour that passes will tell against the success of the mission that the Commissioners have to perform."

'He insisted no further, and said to the Commissioners he had selected:

'"Be ready to start at four o'clock," after which he dismissed us.

'Scarcely had we reached the gallery when he desired the Duke of Vicenza to recall me.

'"I have changed my mind respecting Marshal Marmont," he said; "he could be of service by remaining at Essonne, and I wish you to act as Commissioner in his place. Will you accept?"

'"Yes, you can trust me to do my best."

'"I know it; you are a man of honour."'

The Commissioners were to be followed in the Czar's presence by the members of the 'so-called Provisional Government.' When they met in the large drawing-room a lively exchange of words ensued; the members of the Provisional Government tried to adopt a bullying tone, which the others would not stand, treating them as factious and ambitious men, ready to sacrifice their country, and as perjurers. Caulaincourt found it necessary to intervene, and to recall to both sides that they were in the house of the Emperor of Russia. During this altercation Monsieur de Talleyrand had remained impassible, his chin buried in his cravat; he invited the Commissioners to make use of his house for their discussion; they refused.

Towards the end of the audience one of the Czar's aides-de-camp had said a few words to him

in a low voice; Macdonald fancied he could catch the words, '*Totum corpus.*' The Commissioners went to luncheon with Marshal Ney. They were confident, while their adversaries seemed uneasy; the Senate was reported to be trembling, the white cockades were falling from hats by thousands. Marmont was suddenly called away; a moment later he returned pale and terrified.

'My whole corps went over to the enemy last night!'

He took his sabre, left the room, and they saw him no more. *Totum corpus* was explained! It is certain that Marmont had engaged himself to Prince Schwarzenberg; but it had since been settled between them that, as the Commissioners were coming to treat in the name of the entire army, Marmont's private negotiations should be allowed to drop. That they did not do so was owing to the General commanding at Essonne in the absence of his chief. Souham, summoned to Fontainebleau, feared that the Emperor, aware of the intrigue, would arrest him and precipitate the catastrophe. It was the only one of its kind. Amazed in their turn, the Commissioners felt the ground, till then solid, opening under their feet.

The evening audience was decisive. The Czar declared the King of Rome to be irrevocably out of the question. What was to become of Napoleon? He retained the title of sovereign, and

was given the island of Elba. Then Alexander spoke magnanimously:

'I was formerly his greatest admirer; henceforward I cease to be his enemy, and I restore to him my friendship. Tell him, gentlemen, that if he will not accept this sovereignty, and if he can find no shelter elsewhere, tell him, I say, to come to my dominions. There he shall be received as a sovereign; he can trust the word of Alexander.'

All was over. When the time came to carry the fatal news back to Fontainebleau, Ney vanished. He had previously and publicly given his adhesion to the revolution that had just been accomplished. The treaty negotiated by the Commissioners was signed on April 11; that same evening the act of abdication was placed in the hands of the Provisional Government. Monsieur de Talleyrand had prepared a theatrical mounting for this *dénouement*. The meeting was crowded; he advanced towards the Commissioners:

'Now that all is concluded, we beg, gentlemen, for your adhesion to the newly established order of things.'

Ney exclaimed that he had already given his.

'Therefore,' said Talleyrand, 'I do not address myself to you, but to the Dukes of Tarentum and Vicenza.'

Both dryly refused.

'Talleyrand,' says Macdonald, 'could neither

change colour nor grow paler, but his face seemed to swell as though he were going to burst.'

'But, Monsieur le Maréchal, your personal adhesion is of importance to us, for it is sure to carry great weight both in the army and in France. You have fulfilled all your engagements, and are now free.'

'No, I am not; and nobody knows better than you that as long as a treaty has not been ratified, it may be annulled. After that formality is ended, I shall know what I ought to do.'

Next day, April 12, Macdonald and Caulaincourt returned to Fontainebleau to receive the ratification of the Emperor. He was calm, and thanked them affectionately. He noticed Ney's absence.

'Did not the Marshal return with you?'

No one answered. He desired Macdonald to come to him next morning at nine o'clock.

Next morning Macdonald presented himself. The Dukes of Vicenza and Bassano were there before him. The Emperor, clothed in a dimity dressing-gown, his legs bare, his feet in slippers, was seated in front of the fireplace, his elbows on his knees, his head in his hands, in deep meditation. He did not hear when Macdonald was announced. After a few minutes of silent waiting, Caulaincourt gently told him. He seemed to awake from a dream, rose and shook hands with the Marshal. His face was haggard, his complexion yellowish and sickly.

'Is your Majesty unwell?'

'Yes, I was very ill all night.'

He seated himself again, fell into his former attitude, and began to dream once more. The three men exchanged sad glances. At length Caulaincourt thought it right to rouse him again. This time he rose in a more easy manner.

'I feel rather better,' he said. 'Duke of Tarentum, I cannot express to you how much I am touched by and grateful for your conduct and devotion. I did not know you well. I had been prejudiced against you. I have loaded with favours many others who have now deserted, abandoned me. You, who owe me nothing, have remained faithful. I appreciate your loyalty too late, and I sincerely regret that I am now in a position in which I can only prove my gratitude by words. Formerly I was rich and powerful, now I am poor.'

'I flatter myself, Sire, that your Majesty esteems me sufficiently to believe that, in your present situation, I would accept no reward. My conduct has been absolutely disinterested.'

'I know it; but you can, without wounding your delicacy, accept a present of another kind. It is the sabre of Mourad Bey, which I wore at the battle of Mont Thabor; keep it in memory of me, and of my friendship for you.'

Macdonald thanked the Emperor.

'We threw ourselves into each other's arms,'

he says, 'and embraced one another with effusion. He begged me to come and see him in the island of Elba; at last we separated. All the documents which I was to carry were given to me, and since then I have never seen Napoleon again.'

IX.

Macdonald was free; there was nothing to prevent him any longer from accepting the change of Government which had just been accomplished, and he accepted it simply and loyally.

'You will observe, my son, that I afterwards faithfully kept the new engagements I had contracted. I advise and recommend you to imitate my example.'

He allowed several days to pass, however, without going to the Tuileries to salute the Comte d'Artois, Lieutenant-General of the Kingdom. 'My friends,' he says, 'spoke to me about it, and I had certainly no objection to going; but I thought it only fitting that I should not display too much haste, after having performed a mission not best calculated to please the Prince, and especially after having manifested so much resistance and opposition when my adhesion was first requested.'

On the arrival of Louis XVIII., he went to meet him at Compiègne with the other Marshals; the King received them kindly, told them that they were the strongest pillars of the State; and,

to give full significance to this metaphor, the gouty Monarch laid one hand on Macdonald's shoulder and the other on that of one of his colleagues. The entry into Paris took place on May 4, amid a great throng of people and much cheering. Only one discordant note was sounded on that occasion. The Imperial ex-Guard had been brought, by a forced march, from Fontainebleau, but no preparation whatever had been made for lodging or feeding them. Here was a germ of discontent in the army.

Errors and follies soon accumulated one upon the other; the Duc d'Angoulême committed the mistake of first appearing before the eyes of the Parisians in the uniform of an English General. Promotions, decorations, favours, offices of all kinds were showered upon the gentlemen and *émigrés*, almost to the complete exclusion of the officers of the old army, and of the most deserving officials of the Imperial administration.

'The Government,' says Macdonald, with energetic triteness, 'behaved like a sick man who is utterly indifferent to all around him.'

As a soldier he was indignant, but not less was he indignant as a Liberal, or, to use the expression of the time, a Constitutional. A constitution there was, no doubt, the Charter, and he took it seriously. He was made a member of and Secretary to the Chamber of Peers, and fought against the first political Bill presented to them. It was

a Bill restrictive of the liberty of the press, and in it he fancied he had discovered a violation of Article 8 of the Charter.

When, according to the rules, a Committee of the Chamber carried to the King the Bill, which had been passed by a majority of one only, Louis XVIII., addressing Macdonald, said, in a dry voice :

'Monsieur le Maréchal, I am surprised that you should have both spoken and voted against this measure. When I take the trouble to draw up a Bill, I have good reasons for wishing it to pass.'

'Sire,' was the answer, 'your Majesty did not take me into confidence respecting your plans. All Bills, therefore, should pass as your Majesty causes them to be presented. Registration would serve equally well, since to you alone belongs the initiative, and we must remain mute as the late *Corps Législatif*. But, if I have rightly understood the wording of the Charter, it gives to every man freedom of opinion and of vote. In this Bill I thought I had discovered a violation of the 8th clause, and I made use of my liberty conscientiously, as I always shall do.'

The King made no reply. As they were leaving the presence, Dambray, the Chancellor, stopped Macdonald.

'Pray, Monsieur le Maréchal, is that the right way to speak to the King?'

'What do you mean? Have I been wanting in respect to his Majesty?'

'No, not exactly; but you should have spoken with more reserve, and have picked your words more.'

'That means that either I must have hidden the truth, or displayed repentance. I have never learned to twist myself, and I pity the King if what he ought to know is concealed from him. For my own part, I shall always speak to him honestly, and serve him in the same manner.'

Louis XVIII. was annoyed with him for some little time; but the cloud passed away, and in speaking of Macdonald, he used to call him 'his Outspokenness.'

It is not generally known that the Marshal was one of the framers of the future law dealing with the indemnification of the *émigrés;* events prevented immediate effect being given to the proposal.

Macdonald was governor of the 21st military division at Bourges. He had just been doing the honours of the place to the Duke and Duchess of Angoulême, who were making a tour through the country, when, during the night of March 6, 1815, he received a despatch, desiring him to go immediately to Nîmes, and to march all his troops towards Villefranche (Rhone); no explanation accompanied this order. The answer to the riddle was only given to him four-and-twenty hours later, by means of a report from one of his subordi-

nates, who mentioned the landing of Napoleon. 'This news,' he writes, 'took away my breath, and I at once foresaw the misfortunes that have since settled upon France.' He shared the feelings of the old army; he belonged to it heart and soul; he blamed the faults of the existing Government; but he had given his oath to Louis XVIII., and was resolved to continue faithful to him. He did not hesitate for one moment between his sympathies and his conscience, but went straight to his duty.

He took the road to Lyons, joining at Pougues the Duke of Orleans, who was a day's journey behind the Comte d'Artois, known as Monsieur, who was sent to Lyons to take command of the troops. On his first arrival, Monsieur found himself face to face with serious difficulties; the danger was imminent, the garrison and population openly Bonapartist. Macdonald arrived at ten o'clock on the night of March 9. Delighted at being able to keep such an auxiliary near him, Monsieur told him that, as the roads were intercepted, he must remain with him, and exercise the command with the most extended authority. The night was spent in giving orders and receiving news, which was all as hopeless as possible. A review was ordered to be held next morning, March 10, at six o'clock, on the Place Bellecour. Warning was brought to the Marshal that the troops would not consent to its being held by the Princes.

Macdonald went alone in the first instance, and was, personally, well received, and even cheered; but when, after forming squares, he commenced to harangue the men, recalling to them their oath, exhorting them to do their duty, their sullen demeanour and freezing silence proved to him that he was wasting his words. He saw the officers apart. While they were still perfectly respectful and courteous to him personally, they only answered his remarks by recriminations. All was lost. Monsieur and the Duke of Orleans had found it advisable to start as quickly as possible; the scouts from the Napoleonic army were close at hand, and the reconnoitring parties sent out against them had fraternized with them. The quays by the Rhone were crowded; Macdonald could scarcely make his way. He had just given orders to evacuate Lyons, when a General ventured to say to him: 'It is useless; all measures have been taken to prevent your departure.'

'Surely, sir, you know me too well to suppose that I can be easily stopped. I will make a way for myself with my sword.'

However, he ran the utmost risk of being taken; he had to urge his horse, and start at full gallop. Towards evening, near the top of the hill at Tarare, he at last overtook the Princes' carriages. Monsieur gave him a seat in his own, where were also the Dukes of Fitz-James and Polignac, and the Comte des Cars.

At Paris, as at Lyons, Macdonald had command of the troops, but with no better success.

'Whither does your Majesty think of retiring in the event of being compelled to abandon the capital temporarily?' he had asked the first time he went to the Tuileries. This idea had never occurred to Louis XVIII., who started with surprise.

'We have not come to that yet?'

'No, but we shall have in a week or less. Your Majesty knows Napoleon's activity.'

'I have great faith in Marshal Ney, who has promised to bring him back to me in an iron cage. I will think it over.'

Next day Macdonald renewed his question.

'To La Vendée,' replied the King unhesitatingly.

'If your Majesty goes there, all will be lost. You will be pursued, the coasts blockaded, all retreat will become impossible. Go, rather, to Flanders. Lille or Dunkirk offer you perfect safety, and you can establish your Government there.'

'Your observations please me; let us wait for further news.'

News soon arrived, more and more menacing. Napoleon was at Fontainebleau.

During the night of March 19, Louis XVIII. clandestinely quitted the Tuileries, and took a northerly direction. Next day Macdonald waited

in vain at St. Denis for the troops that had been ordered to assemble there ; they did not come. He then started to rejoin Louis XVIII. The King's Household advanced slowly, and with difficulty; the tail of the column straggled, and the whole march looked very like a rout. The King, who was in front, had halted at Abbeville ; the Marshal implored him to leave it. It was important to arrive at Lille as quickly as possible. Béthune was reached at five in the morning. The population, inquisitive but well-meaning, turned out in undress, the Sub-prefect setting the example. He stood by the door of the royal carriage, one leg half naked, in slippered feet, his coat under his arm, his waistcoat unbuttoned, and his hat on his head! The poor wretch, one hand struggling with his sword, and the other occupied in trying to fasten his necktie, had not one at liberty even to take it off!

At length they came to Lille; the feeling among the townspeople was good, but that of the garrison unsatisfactory. The Duke of Orleans and Marshal Mortier had no influence over it. Louis wished to start for Dunkirk during the night; Macdonald protested. It would be a most undignified proceeding for a King of France to furtively quit a town of which the population was devoted to him. The King persisted; they would start at midnight. During the day the old Prince de Condé had thought right to ask the King

whether, as the next day was Maundy Thursday, his Majesty would perform the ceremony of washing the feet. The moment was, indeed, well chosen! Several comic incidents were mingled with the serious events; that at Béthune has just been related.

On leaving the Tuileries a portmanteau had been hastily packed for the King, containing six shirts, a dressing-gown, and a pair of slippers; this portmanteau had been lost or stolen on the road. The King said sadly to Macdonald:

'They have taken my shirts; I had not too many in the first place; but what I regret still more is the loss of my slippers. Some day, my dear Marshal, you will appreciate the value of slippers that have taken the shape of the foot!'

Like Louis XVIII., the Marshal was gouty; he could, therefore, sympathize with his misfortune.

'Little did the King think, however,' remarks the Marshal, 'that within a few hours he would have lost his kingdom.'

It was eleven at night; Macdonald, who was to precede Louis to Dunkirk, was about to start when the Comte de Blacas entered. Struck by the representations that had been made by him during the morning as to the unkingly proceeding of this nocturnal evasion, the Minister was going to make a fresh attempt to change the King's mind. Half an hour later he returned; the King

24496

had yielded, but in what a condition! Monsieur de Blacas had found him in his shirt-sleeves, his cuffs turned back, shaving. At the first word he started, laid down his razor, and, one half of his face red with passion, the other half white with soap, had exclaimed:

'Why do you keep changing the plans every instant, preventing me either from starting or from going to bed?'

After this he concluded his shaving and did go to bed. Seven o'clock the next morning saw another change of plans; the King had decided to go into Belgium.

'Sire,' said Macdonald, 'he who gives up a game loses it. I have loyally done all in my power to maintain your Majesty's authority and to retain you in your dominions. Your Majesty intends to abandon them. I will conduct you in safety to the frontier, but I will go no further. I will remain unalterably attached and devoted to your Majesty and faithful to my oaths.'

The King, whose brow had at first clouded over, recovered his calmness, and acquiesced. Marshal Mortier also obtained permission to remain behind; poor Marshal Berthier alone, retained by his position as Captain of the Guard, was compelled to follow the King out of France. He was in despair at having to pass before public opinion for a voluntary emigrant. On reaching the frontier the King bade Macdonald an affec-

tionate farewell; the Marshal, much moved, could only say:

'Farewell, sire; *au revoir* in three months.'

Macdonald returned to Paris; at Doullens he succeeded in moderating the ardour of Excelmans, who was hurrying to massacre the disbanded remains of the King's Household. Somewhat farther on the road his carriage passed that of Marshal Ney.

'You are going to Paris; you will be well received there; the Emperor will be delighted to welcome you.'

'I will spare him the trouble; I shall not see him, nor shall I join his party.'

Macdonald's intention was to remain in Paris only long enough to set his affairs in order, after which he meant to go and shut himself up at Courcelles. His door, forbidden to all visitors, was, however, forced by Marshal Davoût, War Minister, who made a futile attempt to induce him to see the Emperor. He was confined to his room for three months by a violent attack of gout, and eventually was just starting for Courcelles when the terrible news arrived of the crowning disaster of Waterloo. Clearly that was not the moment to leave Paris.

Notwithstanding his personal dislike for Fouché, he was obliged to see that individual. This President of the transitional Government told him that it was of the utmost importance that the

King should return to Paris before the arrival of the foreigners, if possible, and that if he wished to give an agreeable surprise to the populace he should wear the tricoloured cockade. Davoût had spoken to the same effect, and their opinion was shared by Macdonald.

The interview took place at Gonesse. Louis XVIII. had embraced him cordially, and had kept him alone with him for over an hour. He was surprised to find that so much importance was attached to this trivial detail, this cockade, this plaything.

'But,' inquired Macdonald, 'was your Majesty then in play when, previous to the emigration, you adopted and wore these colours?'

'Circumstances were very different. I had to overcome the Revolution then.'

'And to make use of it now, sire. Were not these the colours of the Royal Family in former days, and did not the Dutch receive them from Henri IV.?'

'Yes; but then they were the livery of his household.'

'Your Majesty doubtless remembers his remark that "Paris was well worth a Mass"?'

'Yes, but it was not a very Catholic one.'

The Comte d'Artois, the Duc de Berry, the chief officers, and Ministers had preceded the King to the castle of Arnouville.

'My brother, my nephew,' said the King, 'here is our friend the Marshal. Embrace him.'

Monsieur did it with very good grace; his son with some embarrassment and constraint. He objected to Macdonald's frankness, and had still further ground for his objection when the Marshal, wishing to save the second Restoration from the faults of the first, commenced to enumerate a long list of them: abuses, extravagance, favours unaccompanied by discernment, on the one hand; on the other, injustice, haughtiness, contempt, and, he even ventured to add, violation of the Charter. He went on to say that in March there had been no plot, in proof of which he advanced the fact that, during the Hundred Days, nobody had boasted of having had any share in it.

'There is much truth, brother, in what the Marshal says,' remarked the King; but Monsieur and the others merely nodded their heads.

Next morning, as Macdonald was taking his leave preparatory to starting for Paris, the King kept him back, and said:

'My dear Marshal, I am going to ask another service at your zeal. Here is the ordinance appointing you Grand Chancellor of the Legion of Honour; I signed it at Roye, where it was presented to me by Monsieur de Talleyrand.'

Macdonald expressed his thanks for this great mark of favour, but asked himself how it happened that he owed it to Monsieur de Talleyrand? What interest could he have in it? On the way

to Paris he was able to discover the secret. The President of the Council, dreading lest he should have him as a colleague, in the capacity of War Minister, was boldly sending him into exile in a high office which had no political functions.

Louis XVIII. was about to put Macdonald's devotion to a severe and cruel test. He asked him to take command of the Army of the Loire, or in other words, to arrange for its disbandment. The Marshal refused, and held out for a long time; 'but,' he says, 'the King insisted, with so much determination, upon the personal nature of the service that he implored me to render—these are his own words—that he overcame my opposition, but upon two formal conditions, first, that I should have absolute freedom of action; and second, that I should in no way be charged to become the instrument of any measures that might be taken against individuals, and still less with their execution. The impolitic ordinances of July 25, whereby many Generals and others who had taken part in the beginning of the Hundred Days were brought to trial, or sent into exile, were published, and, will it be believed? they were based upon the report of Fouché, Duke of Otranto, Minister of Police, of the very man who, before and during that period, had borne so large a share in the internal events with which they had been filled!'

The day after his arrival at Bourges, Macdonald

profited by the visit paid him by his troops to take up a clear, honest, and, as regards the Government, most courageous position. The assembly was large, all the Generals and officers being present.

'Let those,' he said, raising his voice, 'whose names unfortunately appear on these fatal ordinances take measures for their safety; they have not a minute to lose; at any moment persons may arrive bearing mandates of which I shall be unable to prevent the execution. All that I can do is to give them full warning, and help them to escape.'

Among the number was General Brayer, who had tried forcibly to prevent his departure from Lyons; he began to make excuses.

'Fly!' was Macdonald's only answer.

He did even more. That very evening there arrived, without uniform, in civil dress, some of the Body-guard, some *exempts*, as they were called under the old *régime*; they were bearers of warrants, and of orders to the heads of the police to help them in their requisitions. When they presented themselves before the Marshal, he told them that, in the present exasperated state of the men's minds, he advised them not to show themselves, adding that he would give them supper, and mattresses for the night, and that the next day they would see what was best to be done. Their door was locked; messengers hastened

through the cantonments giving the alarm, and when morning came and the huntsmen started on their quest, the game had vanished. They complained.

'You are wrong to grumble,' said the Marshal, 'you ought rather to thank me; for had your disguise been suspected, you would have run great risks.'

'We would have braved them.'

'Then why did you disguise yourselves? Since your mission has no longer any object, in your own interests, go; quit the neighbourhood of the army at once; go and draw up your report.'

The only result of this was a somewhat tart letter from the Duc de Berry, in which he said that, were he, the Duke, commanding in Macdonald's place, he would throw the recalcitrants out of window; to which the Marshal replied that it would be an excellent plan if there were no risk of having to lead the way one's self.

However, this hateful disbandment had to be made at last. Macdonald did it with the utmost tact; but it was grievous to him to have to bring misery upon so many brave fellows who lost their active service pay, or in other words, half their means of existence, thereby. There was but little mutiny; the disbandment was carried out quietly.

'It was not without a cruel pang,' says the

Marshal eloquently, 'that I witnessed the disappearance of that bold and unhappy army, which had for so long been triumphant; no trace now remained of it; an ill-wind had blown, dispersing it like dust, and we were now at the mercy of the foreigner!'

All was ended; the Marshal's last order of the day is dated October 21, 1815, but he did not receive permission to return to Paris till February 6 following. They were kind enough to tell him that his presence at Bourges acted as a moral, in default of a physical force; it was a polite way of keeping him at a distance. At length he came back to take up his duties as Arch-Chancellor of the Legion of Honour.

Here ends the story of the 'Recollections.'

'Since that period,' says the Marshal, 'no personal circumstance relating to my military or political career deserves mention.'

Overwhelmed by gout, unable to mount a horse, he resigned the Arch-Chancellorship on November 15, 1830, and retired to his property at Courcelles, where he died on September 25, 1840, at the age of seventy-five.

The manuscript contains, by way of epilogue, a characteristic anecdote of an occurrence at St. Cloud, during the reign of Louis XVIII.

Macdonald, Major-General of the Royal Guard, on duty, was at luncheon at the King's table, where he was seated beside Monsieur.

'Before the Revolution,' said his august neighbour, 'you served in the Irish Brigade?'

'Yes, Monseigneur.'

'Nearly all the officers emigrated?'

'Yes, Monseigneur.'

'Why did you not do as they did? What kept you in France?'

'I was in love, Monseigneur.'

'Ha, ha! So you were in love, sir?'

'Yes, Monseigneur, like many another; I was married, and about to become a father; and besides, your Royal Highness knows that emigration was caused by many motives. It was not devotion or public opinion which always settled the question, especially among the young officers, who, like myself, knew very little about politics, but often very ugly circumstances, such as debts, etc., which made it advisable. I must make a confession to your Royal Highness.'

'What is it?'

'That I adore the Revolution.'

Monsieur started, and changed colour.

'I detest the men who took part in it, and their crimes; the army took no share in it; it never looked behind, but always ahead, at the enemy, and it deplores the excesses that were being committed. How can I fail to adore the Revolution? To that I owe my rank, my elevation; without it, should I now have the honour of sitting at the King's table, next to your Royal Highness?'

Monsieur, who had recovered himself and regained his good humour, clapped him on the shoulder, exclaiming:

'And you are right! I like your honesty!'

Such was the man.

CAMILLE ROUSSET.

STEPHEN JAMES JOSEPH ALEXANDER

MACDONALD,

BORN AT SANCERRE, NOVEMBER 17, 1765;

ENTERED THE ARMY IN 1785;

GENERAL OF DIVISION, 1794;

GOVERNOR OF ROME, 1798;

AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY TO THE COURT OF COPENHAGEN, 1801;

CREATED MARSHAL ON THE FIELD OF BATTLE OF WAGRAM, JULY 6, 1809;

DUKE OF TARENTUM, AUGUST 15, 1809;

PEER OF FRANCE, 1814;

KNIGHT GRAND-CROSS OF THE ORDER OF ST. LOUIS, 1814;

GOVERNOR OF THE XXIst MILITARY DIVISION, 1814;

ARCH-CHANCELLOR OF THE LEGION OF HONOUR, 1815;

MAJOR-GENERAL OF THE ROYAL BODY-GUARD, 1816;

DIED AT COURCELLES-LE-ROI, SEPTEMBER 25, 1840.

The Companions in Arms of Macdonald:

DAVOÛT, Louis Nicolas, *b.* 1770, at Annaux; *d.* 1823, from natural causes.

MASSÉNA, Andrea, *b.* 1758, at Nice; *d.* 1817, from natural causes.

SOULT, Nicolas Jean de Dieu, *b.* 1769, at St. Amand la Bastide; *d.* 1851; from natural causes.

NEY, Michel, *b.* 1769, at Sarre-Louis; *d.* 1815. Murdered by the [Bourbons.

AUGEREAU, Pierre François Charles, *b.* 1757, at Paris; *d.* 1816, from natural causes.

SUCHET, Louis Gabriel, *b.* 1770, at Lyons; *d.* 1826, from natural [causes.

ST. CYR, Laurent Gouvion, *b.* 1764, at Toul; *d.* 1830, from natural causes.

MURAT, Joachim, *b.* 1771, at Bastide Fortunière; *d.* 1815. Shot by [the Bourbons.

[**MACDONALD,** Stephen James Joseph Alexander, *b.* 1765, at Sancerre; *d.* 1840, from natural causes.]

MARMONT, Auguste Frédéric Louis Viesse de, *b.* 1774, at Châtillon-sur-Seine; *d.* 1852, from natural causes.

LANNES, Jean, *b.* 1769, at Lectoure; *d.* 1809. Killed at Aspern.

OUDINOT, Nicolas Charles, *b.* 1767, at Bar-le-Duc; *d.* 1847, from natural causes.

MORTIER, Édouard Adolphe Casimir Joseph, *b.* 1768, at Cambrai; *d.* 1835. Assassinated by a bomb.

LEFÉBVRE, François Joseph, *b.* 1755, at Ruffach; *d.* 1820. from [natural causes.

GROUCHY, Émanuel, *b.* 1766, at Paris; *d.* 1847, from natural causes.

VICTOR, Claude PERRIN, *b.* 1764, at Marche; *d.* 1841, from natural causes.

JOURDAN, Jean Baptiste, *b.* 1762, at Limoges; *d.* 1833, from [natural causes.

BRUNE, Guillaume Marie Anne, *b.* 1763, at Brives la Gaillarde: *d.* 1815. Murdered by his countrymen.

BESSIÈRES, Jean Baptiste, *b.* 1768, at Preissac; *d.* 1813. Killed [in action.

MONCEY, Bon Adrien Jeannot de, *b.* 1754, at Besançon; *d.* 1842, from natural causes.

BERTHIER, Alexandre, *b.* 1753, at Versailles; *d.* 1815. Thrown out of window.

SÉRURIER, Jean Matthieu Philibert, *b.* 1742, at Laon; *d.* 1819, from natural causes.

BERNADOTTE, Jean Baptiste, *b.* 1764, at Pau; *d.* 1844, from [natural causes.

KELLERMANN, François Christophe, *b.* 1735, at Strasbourg; *d.* 1820, from natural causes.

PONIATOWSKI, Jozef Anton, *b.* 1763, at Warsaw; *d.* 1813. Drowned in the Elster.

PÉRIGNON, Dominique Catherine, *b.* 1754, at Thoulouse; *d.* 1818, [from natural causes.

Junot, Duke of Abrantes, and Clarke, Duke of Feltre, were not Marshals. The Viceroy of Italy also was not a Marshal.

The Marshals of the First Napoleon.

DAVOÛT. M. 1804, Duke of Auerstadt 1808, Prince of Eckmühl 1809.

MASSÉNA. M. 1804, Duke of Rivoli 1808, Prince of Essling 1810.

SOULT. M. 1804, Duke of Dalmatia 1808.

NEY. M. 1804, Duke of Elchingen 1808, Prince of the Moskowa 1813.

AUGEREAU. M. 1804, Duke of Castiglione 1808.

SUCHET. M. 1811, Count 1808, Duke of Albufera da Valencia 1812.

ST. CYR. M. 1812, Count 1808.

MURAT. M. 1804, High Admiral of France 1805, Grand Duke of Berg and Cleves 1806, King of Naples 1808.

[**MACDONALD.** M. 1809, Duke of Tarentum 1809.]

MARMONT. M. 1809, Duke of Ragusa 1808.

LANNES. M. 1804, Duke of Montebello 1808.

OUDINOT. M. 1809, Count 1808, Duke of Reggio 1810.

MORTIER. M. 1804, Chancellor of the Legion of Honour 1804, Duke of Treviso 1807.

LEFÉBVRE. M. 1804, Duke of Dantzic 1807.

GROUCHY. M. 1815, Count 1809. (*Marquis by descent.*) Marshalate annulled.

VICTOR. M. 1807, Duke of Belluno 1808.

JOURDAN. M. 1804, Count 1814. Marshalate annulled.

BRUNE. M. 1804, Count.

BESSIÈRES. M. 1804, Duke of Istria 1809.

MONCEY. M. 1804, Duke of Conegliano 1808.

BERTHIER. M. 1804, Duke of Valengin 1806, Prince of Neufchâtel 1806, Vice-Constable of the Empire 1807, Prince of Wagram 1809.

SÉRURIER. M. 1804, Count 1808.

BERNADOTTE. M. 1804, Prince of Ponte Corvo 1805. Marshalate annulled. (*Afterwards King of Sweden.*)

KELLERMANN. M. 1804, Duke of Valmy 1808.

PONIATOWSKI. M. 1813. (*Prince by descent.*)

PÉRIGNON. M. 1804, Count 1811.

Generals Junot, Vandamme, Gérard, Clausel, Lauriston, Souham, Bertrand, etc., held at different times independent commands of equal importance to those usually entrusted to Marshals. Generals Junot, Vandamme, and Dupont lost the *bâtons* promised to them.

A FEW OF THE LEADING

General Junot.
„ Clausel.
„ Vandamme.
„ Souham.
„ Bertrand.
„ Lauriston.
„ Maison.
„ Gérard.
, Rapp.
„ Savary.
„ Molitor.
„ Duhesme.
„ Dorsenne.
„ Reille.
„ Foy.
„ Loison.
„ Régnier.
„ Montbrun.
„ Drouet (d'Erlon).
„ Sebastiani.
„ Lasalle.
„ Marchand.
„ Dupont.
„ Laborde.
„ Drouot.
„ Excelmans.
„ Milhaud.
„ Latour Maubourg.
„ Nansouty.
„ Lefèbvre Desnouettes.
„ Pajol.
„ Mouton (Lobau).
„ Gudin.
„ Friant.
„ Morand.
„ Donzelot.
„ Verdier.
„ Harispe.
„ Conroux.

General Claparède.
„ G. St. Cyr.
„ Dessolles.
„ Dejean.
„ Merle.
„ Maureillan (Poitevin).
„ Compans.
„ Marcognet.
„ Grenier.
„ Partonneaux.
„ Danthouard.
„ Durutte.
„ Lariboisière.
„ Haxo.
„ Bernard.
„ Éblé.
„ Philippon.
„ Bizanet.
„ Sanson.
„ Desaix.
„ Lanusse.
„ Kléber.
„ Duroc.
„ Menou.
„ Belliard.
„ Kellermann (*Younger*).
„ Daru.
„ Clarke.
„ Caulaincourt.
„ Dumas.
„ Gambier.
„ Delmas.
„ Bonnet.
„ Mouton-Duvernet.
„ Lamarque.
„ Delzons.
„ Maransin.
„ Castex.
„ Curial.

GENERALS OF THE PERIOD.

General Lahoussaye.
„ Maucune.
„ Chastel.
„ Latour d'Auvergne.
„ Puthod.
„ Thomières.
„ Plausanne.
„ Guyot.
„ Bachelu.
„ Alix.
„ Fouché.
„ Polombini.
„ Lecchi.
„ Roguet.
„ Vial.
„ Lamarque.
„ Gratien.
„ D'Armagnac.
„ Bordesoult.
„ Moreau.
„ Dumourier.
„ Pichegru.
„ Joubert.
„ Hoche.
„ Championnet.
„ Richepanse.
„ Rochambeau.
„ Cambronne.
„ Delfanti.
„ Gazan.
„ Lemarrois.
„ Gassendi.
„ Dessaix (*another*).
„ Moreau (*another*).
„ Grandjean.
„ Pécheux.
„ Baraguay d'Hilliers.
„ Taupin.
„ L'Héritier.
„ Paris.

General l'Abbé.
„ Villatte.
„ Legrand.
„ Broussier.
„ Laval.
„ Charpentier.
„ Albert.
„ Dode.
„ Colbert.
„ Defrane.
„ Ricard.
„ Château.
„ Ségur.
„ P. Soult.
„ Domon.
„ Pino.
„ Dumonceau.
„ Lepic.
„ Lagrange.
„ Petit.
„ Barrois.
„ St. Germain.
„ Le Grand.
„ Truquet.
„ Lacroix.
„ Dufour.
„ Lamotte.
„ Corbineau.
„ Lacoste.
„ Mallet.
„ Bourmont.
„ Sortin.
„ Guilleminot.
„ Ledru.
„ Delantre.
„ Triaire.
„ Gifflenga.
„ Dommarget.
„ Girard.
„ Dugommier.

DIPLOMATISTS

REFERRED TO IN THIS WORK, WITH THE DIFFERENT TITLES THEY ARE MENTIONED UNDER.

THE PRINCE OF BENEVENTO
CHARLES MAURICE DE TALLEYRAND PÉRIGORD, [*b.* 1754; *d.* 1838.

THE DUKE OF OTRANTO
JOSEPH FOUCHÉ, *b.* 1763; *d.* 1820.

THE DUKE OF VICENZA
ARMAND AUGUSTIN LOUIS DE CAULAINCOURT, [*b.* 1773; *d.* 1827.

THE DUKE OF BASSANO
HUGUES BERNARD MARET, *b.* 1763; *d.* 1839.

THE DUKE OF ROVIGO
ANNE JEAN MARIE RENÉ SAVARY, *b.* 1774; *d.* 1833.

THE DUKE OF CADORE
JEAN BAPTISTE NOMPÈRE DE CHAMPAGNY, *b.* 1756; [*d.* 1834.

BESIDES ALSO

SPECIAL APPOINTMENTS HELD BY

GENERAL SEBASTIANI.

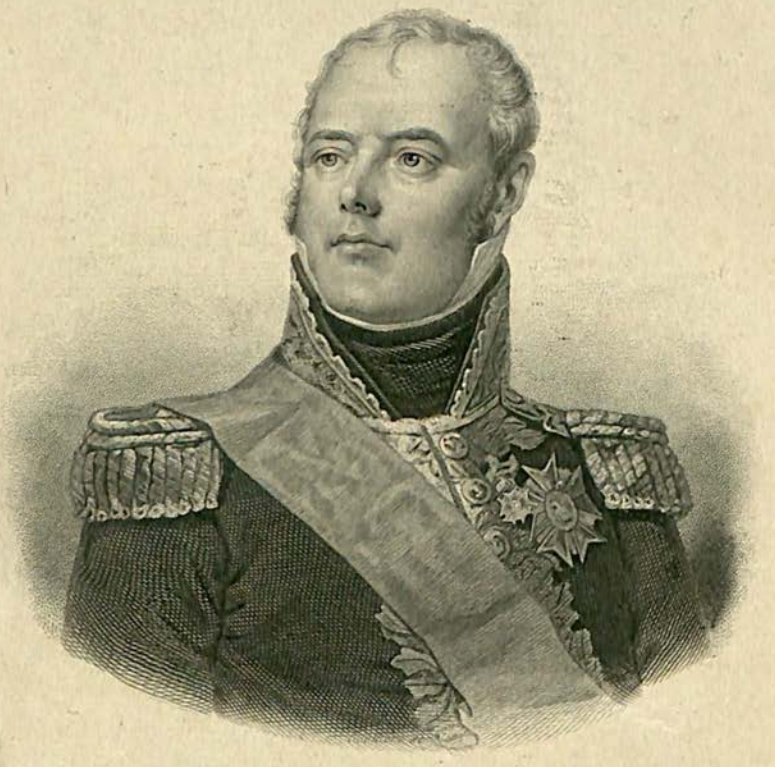
GENERAL GARDANNE

GENERAL LAURISTON.

RECOLLECTIONS

OF

MARSHAL MACDONALD



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MARSHAL MACDONALD

DUKE OF TARENTUM

Paris for Richard Bentley and Son 1892

Printed by Ch. Wittmann Paris

RECOLLECTIONS OF

MARSHAL MACDONALD

DUKE OF TARENTUM

CHAPTER I.

Introduction—Journey to the Hebrides—Parentage—Brothers and Sisters—With Maillebois—Life at Sancerre—Gentleman-Cadet—At St. Germain—Marriage.

Courcelles-le-Roi,*
May 16, 1825.

THE idea has occurred to me, my son; of beginning this notice of my life for you, without caring to know when it will be finished; nevertheless, I set to work, having for guide and assistance nothing but my recollections. I let my pen travel on and write these lines, as you will observe, in the simplest and most familiar style possible. Truth needs no embellishment, and, moreover, I am not writing for the public; these lines are not intended for the light of day. I write in

* This property is situated in the department of the Loiret. —*Translator's note.*

haste from an old habit of never leaving anything till to-morrow; besides, my return to Paris cannot long be postponed, and once there, I shall have no time to continue this work, as I am contemplating a journey of six weeks or two months, in order to see the three kingdoms of the British Empire, with which I am unacquainted, and to visit my father's birthplace in the Hebrides.

Paris,
June 1, 1825.

You and my family will probably be surprised, and justly so, at finding among my papers as yet no special recital of my campaigns, not even a daily journal; I owe you some explanations upon this point.

Twenty years ago I had ample leisure, as I was not being employed,* but I had recently acquired Courcelles. It was the first time that I had owned an estate, and it was but natural that I should wish to enjoy all its pleasures. Surrounded with books on agriculture, I discovered attractions hitherto unknown to me. I forgot the papers locked up in my chest, and all my fine schemes for writing my military life were temporarily abandoned. If Heaven prolongs my unhappy existence,† I will interpolate in this narrative an

* After the trial of Moreau, in which a futile and unjust attempt was made to implicate Macdonald, he remained five years in disgrace; he was not recalled to service until 1809.

† He had just lost his third wife, mother of the son to whom these recollections are addressed. She was Mademoiselle de

account of my military career, and of the different ranks that I have held. As for events, they are written in every history of the time; but beware of them, especially upon any subject connected with me, for histories, narratives, and biographical notices must be affected by our recent troubles, and consequently by the passions of men and by party spirit; however, impartial history will one day avenge those who have fallen victims.

I have never had reason to reproach myself, nor have I ever had to blush for any circumstance in my life. I received an untarnished name. I transmit it to you, feeling sure that you will keep it pure. My conscience during my long and active life reproaches me with nothing, because I always followed three safe guides: honour, fidelity, and disinterestedness; and I like to believe that my guides will be yours also.

Courcelles-le-Roi,
August 6, 1825.

My rapid journey has been brought to a satisfactory conclusion. The coast of France looked to me like the Promised Land. I have once more seen France, my beloved country! This is the first anniversary of your birth. What joy and happiness

Bourgoing, and had previously married her cousin, Baron de Bourgoing. She had two children by the Marshal: this son, Alexander, afterwards Duke of Tarentum, and a daughter who died in infancy.—*Translator's note.*

that event caused us! But, alas! how many regrets and torturing recollections have come since!

I ought to tell you something about your family upon your father's side. I alone can give you details, which I knew but imperfectly, but which, in the course of my travels, I collected on the spot. Your paternal grandfather was born in 1719, in the parish of Coubry, or Boubry, in South Uist, one of the Hebrides.* He was educated in France at the Scotch College at Douai, and was probably destined for an ecclesiastical career. I know not what were his views, tastes, or wishes, but I do know that, after completing a brilliant course of study, he returned to the place of his birth. Thence he was summoned by Prince Charles [Edward] Stuart, surnamed the Pretender.

Throughout the disastrous expedition of 1745 my father attached himself to the good and bad fortune of the Prince, like a good, honest, loyal Scotchman. The cup of their common misfortunes, and of so many others besides, was filled by the loss of the battle of Culloden, near Inverness, in the Highlands, in 1746. The details of this disastrous event are written in history, and so generally known that it would

* I learn from Mr. John Macdonald, of Glenaladale, whose father accompanied the Marshal on his journey to the Hebrides, that the district in which this grandfather was born is that of Houghbeag. See also note at the end of vol. i.—*Translator's note.*

be superfluous to repeat them here; but what are less known are the results that this unhappy affair had upon the life of the Prince, who was compelled for several months to seek shelter in caves and rocks, in order to save his head, upon which a price had been set. He wandered from island to island, guided by my father, until at last a heroine, Flora Macdonald, of the Isle of Skye, succeeded in baffling their pursuers, and exposed herself in order to assist their flight on board a French man-of-war. Miraculously saved, they reached France. Your grandfather was put into Ogilvy's Scotch regiment, and the Prince never gave him another thought!

After the peace of 1763, nearly all the foreign regiments were disbanded. Among them was Ogilvy's, and your grandfather, proscribed in his own country, and abandoned in this one, was reduced to live upon the modest pension of three hundred *livres* (about £30). Almost immediately afterwards he made what, in military parlance, is called a 'garrison marriage'; that is to say, he wedded a girl without any fortune. Your grandfather had settled himself at Sedan, where I was born, when he was invited by Lord Thomas Nairn, proscribed like himself, to the little town of Sancerre. The cheapness of living, and probably of the wine, which is good, had determined these gentlemen to settle there; other Scotchmen had preceded them.

In this retreat, with his friends and his books, he consoled himself for the cruelty of fortune. He was very studious, well versed in the Greek and Latin tongues, which he spoke easily, as well as French, English, and Gaelic, his native language. He never saw his country again, although in 1784 an Act of Amnesty was passed by the English Parliament, permitting fugitives to return. He died at Sancerre in 1788, in all probability from the effects of a fall he had had some years previously, and which had dislocated his hip. It had been badly set by an ignorant surgeon. I was at that time quartered at Calais. One of his compatriots, Mr. MacNab, undertook to represent me. He collected all his books and papers, with the intention of restoring them to me. Among them I should certainly have found many details about my family, and about the events of which your grandfather had been both witness and victim; but Mr. MacNab, at that time corporal in the bodyguard, was, like so many others, seized during the Revolution, arrested and imprisoned. His papers and mine were carried off, and are lost for ever. I have these melancholy details from himself.

I have no information about your paternal grandmother. I only know she was of good family. She was born at St. Omer, but as her father, a soldier by profession, was a stranger in the town, nobody remembered her, and I could obtain

no information when I caused inquiries to be made.

Unfortunately, while I was moving from garrison to garrison, your grandfather and grandmother had, two or three years before the death of the former, differences of so serious a nature that they voluntarily separated. I fancy that your grandmother, perhaps embittered by trouble, had some slight affection of the mind, but it was scarcely noticeable, and certainly not so apparent to others as to me. She retired to Fontainebleau, where she ended her days twenty-five or twenty-six years ago. Your grandfather was very gentle, she was quick-tempered; she was a great talker, he was naturally silent. I have heard him, however, talk very well; his memory was well stored, full of anecdote, and he was a good musician, playing the violin; he was much esteemed and sought after by the society of that time.

They had four children, two boys and two girls; two died at an early age, my sister and I have survived. My sister was educated in a convent at Rouen, and married a Swiss doctor at Soleure, who afterwards gave up the 'fruitless science of Galen,' became a soldier, and was killed, holding the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, at the passage of the Beresina, in the fatal expedition of 1812. They left three girls and a boy, who is now in India, at Pondicherry, in command of a company of Sepoys. One of the daughters

is a nun; the eldest married Major-General the Viscount de Saint-Mars, and the second Colonel de Couëssin, attached to my staff. They are all living and have children. Your aunt, after the death of her husband, Lieutenant-Colonel (*Chef de bataillon*)* Weltner, came to settle at Beaulieu, near me, and died there two years ago.

My early studies had been somewhat neglected at Sancerre. I was sent to Paris to a school kept by Chevalier Pawlet (*sic*). His foreign name caused the proscription of the tutor, and his establishment was suppressed at the beginning of the Revolution. I had profited fairly well by his instruction. Before going thither, I had been destined for the Church, in the hope of obtaining a canonry at Cambrai. But my military tastes were developed by my studies and surroundings, and especially by Homer, the reading of which set my brain on fire. I thought myself an Achilles.

They wished to make an engineer of me, and I was encouraged to study mathematics. Two comrades and I had to undergo an examination; we failed, and were sent back for another year; but in the interval powerful patrons, Prince Ferdinand de Rohan, Archbishop of Cambrai, Countess d'Albestroop, Lady Mary and Lady Lucy Stuart, obtained for me, in 1785, a lieutenancy in Maillebois' regiment, then serving the Dutch.

* *Chef de bataillon* means a lieutenant-colonel of infantry, *Chef d'escadron* a lieutenant-colonel of cavalry.

The seven united provinces formed at that time a republican federation, which on more than one occasion had fought successfully against States much stronger than herself. This time she had to face her neighbour, the Emperor of Austria, Sovereign of the Netherlands, who had quarrelled with her on behalf of Antwerp and Ghent, for the free navigation of the Scheldt. The Dutch, trusting in the defences which gave them safety — their good fleet, their frontiers surrounded by rivers, and their bristling fortresses —maintained only a small standing army; but threatened as they were at this moment, they were seeking everywhere for generals, officers, and men.

On hearing of my appointment, and the object for which the regiment was being raised, I was nearly beside myself with pleasure. My head was already crammed with books upon the art of war, with histories of sieges, campaigns, combats and battles. I was already planning out various schemes of attack and defence, and flattered myself that I should reap at least a colonelcy in this campaign, and that in the next I should become a rival to the Great Turenne. Such were my ideas when I first put on my uniform at the beginning of 1785, and started with a number of other officers for our corps at Nimeguen, Arnheim, and Bois-le-Duc.

You will easily conceive with what ardour I

commenced the work of training my men. I had learnt the rudiments at Chevalier Pawlet's school, which was organized upon the lines of military schools, enjoying some of their prerogatives, notably the privilege of receiving officers' commissions, without counting those granted to such as passed from there into the special colleges for the artillery and engineers.

You will experience, I hope, my son, the real joy that is caused by a first uniform and a first commission; and although I have reached the highest rank, I assure you, in perfect sincerity and frankness, that my colonelcy was the crowning point to me.

My new brother officers and I thought of nothing but how soon we could take the field against the Austrians. All our conversations turned upon this subject, so full for us of charm and attraction, whereon we each founded his ambition, his promotion, and his fortune, when we learned with deep chagrin that peace had been concluded, and that our regiment would be disbanded. The Dutch thus justified the witticism pronounced by Frederick the Great, who on one occasion inquired of their Ambassador how matters were going with them.

'Very well,' was the answer. 'We shall hold our own against the Emperor.'

'Nonsense!' replied the King. 'I see exactly what will happen: you will give *a tip*' (*pourboire*)

'to his Imperial Majesty, and there will be an end of the matter.'

This opinion, though expressed in joke, was found to be borne out completely when the treaty was published.

In the statute ordering the regiment to be raised of which the Count de Maillebois was Colonel, as well as being Commander-in-chief of the Dutch forces, a proviso had been inserted that, in case of peace and consequent disbandment, all the officers should receive as pension half their pay, on condition of spending it in the country, or a sum down, amounting to four years of the said pension, with permission to leave the country at their pleasure. It was not a very large sum, for the Dutch, a careful people, had only eight months in their year, each month containing six weeks.

After taking the advice of my father and patrons, I returned to France. They then put their heads together to save me from living in idleness at Sancerre, where I was wearing out my uniform by showing it off at Mass and vespers on Sundays, and to the country people on market days. Everyone made way for me, and this could not fail to increase my stock of vanity.

It was very difficult to be reinstated in a regiment in the service of France. Government seems to have viewed with displeasure the custom prevalent among our officers, of leaving their

rank in their own army for a superior rank in the Legion. The Austrian Minister had made representations, and, in order to give no justification for the suspicion of connivance, the French Minister refused to reinstate those who had willingly abandoned their ranks; *a fortiori* he would refuse to give even a sub-lieutenant's commission to the others. They were, however, permitted to begin their career as gentlemen-cadets, according to the established rules.

These obstacles were pointed out to me, together with the necessity of coming to a decision. I did not hesitate. The lazy life of Sancerre wearied me. I had had a taste of life in garrison; the work, exercises, parades, inspections, manœuvres, which bored so many others, especially the old officers who had fought in America, were attractive to me. Count Arthur Dillon, who fell a victim to the Revolution, after having served it loyally, offered me a cadetship in the regiment that bore his name, of which he was proprietary Colonel. I put on the red coat; a white aiglet, distinctive mark of the gentlemen-cadets, took the place of my Lieutenant's epaulettes. I am bound to admit that it was not without a heavy heart that I took this courageous resolution, nor without a lively feeling of grief, which, however, diminished upon my hearing that I should soon be made an officer. That was a crumb of comfort, certainly, but it seemed to me a

very long way off, seeing that up to the rank of Captain promotion only went by seniority, that there were several cadets above me, and that the list of officers was very long. Some of these were there as substitutes, etc. Great modifications have now been introduced into the laws governing promotion, more favourable to distinguished talents, and especially to patronage.

I thus spent several years, always keenly interested in my profession, and continuing my studies. I had chosen my friends well; they also were fond of work. They were good musicians and draughtsmen. I have always regretted that I could do no more than scrape my fiddle. I had begun too late, and my masters, independently of their bad method, knew little more about it than I did. My other amusements were fencing, dancing, and the theatre. My taste for music and good acting had helped me to store my memory; it became stronger and purer while I was employed in Italy. It is an immense advantage to a young officer to be able to play an instrument; the best society is always open to him, especially if to his talent he joins good breeding and education, as well as good behaviour and regularity. He must not, however, sacrifice his duty to his pleasure, for duty should always come first.

The Revolution broke out; every officer's brain was in a ferment; no one dreamed of anything

save war and promotion. The camp of St. Omer, where I was with my regiment, was able, by means of meetings and conventions, to free itself from the severe and humiliating discipline to which the council of war wished to subject all regiments and officers.

At the period when the officers obtained their long leave, I profited by mine, at the end of 1790, to go to my sister at Andrezy, and to St. Germain. I was at that time a Lieutenant, a little bit of a musician, and, though I could only scrape my violin, I was presented in several houses, and voted tolerable.

A young and pretty creole* appeared to reciprocate the attention I paid her. I offered her my hand, which was accepted; her mother gave her approval, but the father's consent was yet to be obtained. He was a wily old fox, who had amassed a fortune in the West Indies, and more than economical, not to say stingy. The only fortune I could offer was my youth and my military prospects; he wanted something more solid. He politely refused my proposal, but I would not take 'No' for an answer. We set Colonel Beurnonville, since Marshal of France, to work; he was well acquainted with the family, and had

* Mademoiselle Jacob, by whom he had two daughters, the Duchesse de Massa and the Comtesse de Perregaux. See Michaud, 'Biographie Universelle, Ancienne et Moderne,' Paris, Desplaces, vol. xxv., art. 'Macdonald.'—*Translator's note.*

the ear of the father, who was his wife's uncle. The latter, who was afraid of the Colonel, though he had declined my offer, thought fit to make inquiries among the patrons already named, and whom I had mentioned to him. At last, worried and tormented, he finished by giving his consent to our union, which was celebrated May 5, 1791. From that time to the day of his death he was very good to me; he became very fond of me, and I honestly reciprocated his affection.

CHAPTER II.

First Campaign—Battle of Jemmappes—Appointed Colonel—Arrival at Lille—Dumouriez's Treachery—Events at Lille—Interrogation—End of the Incident.

THE Revolution made giant strides; war seemed imminent. I was recalled to my regiment. War broke out at the beginning of 1792. Beurnonville was employed in a command, and took me as his aide-de-camp.

There had been considerable emigration among the officers of the army, and particularly among those of my regiment. Efforts were made to induce me to go, too: but I was married, and very much attached to my wife, who was near her confinement. These were surely good reasons! Besides, I cared nothing about politics.

The campaign opened, and its first start was not happy; there was no feeling of community, and a great deal of insubordination. General Dumouriez came to take command of the northern frontier; his head-quarters were at the camp at Maulde, then under the orders of General Beurnonville. He gave me several commissions, which

I carried out satisfactorily, and wished to keep me near him, with the rank of Captain. Beurnonville, seeing that it was for my interest, strongly urged me to accept. Gratitude and friendship compelled me to refuse, and I resisted, but ended by submitting to reiterated pressure, the more readily that he and I should still continue in the same *corps d'armée.*

I will enter here into no details of the events of the war, even so far as they concerned me personally; they have passed into the domain of history, and to do so I should have to write memoirs, which is not at all my intention. Perhaps I will collect them some day, if I can find time and my papers; but now I have too much to do, and my career (except the circumstances of which I spoke at the outset) has been too full to admit of my undertaking such a lengthy task.

Some months later, General Dumouriez received orders to join the Army of the Ardennes. He took up his quarters at Grandpré, then at St. Menehould, called Valmy, or *Camp de la Lune.* The Prussians attacked him there; he resisted; the enemy retired.* I was not forgotten amid the numerous promotions that took place. I

* This is the actual text of the original manuscript. Had the Marshal, who wrote very rapidly and never re-read what he had written, looked over this peculiarly laconic passage, he would doubtless have thought that, even in a *résumé*, he might have found more to say concerning the Argonne campaign, and would have expressed it better.

was made Lieutenant-Colonel, now called *Chef de bataillon.* General Dumouriez left orders with Beurnonville, who was Lieutenant-General, to lead a body to the assistance of Lille, and went himself to Paris to devise the ulterior plan of action. I followed him thither.

After a short stay, we rejoined the army assembled under the walls of Valenciennes. The plan decided upon in Paris was to invade Belgium. For the execution of this enterprise the Commander-in-chief caused attempts to be made the whole length of the frontier, and his aides-de-camp were sent to all the principal points of attack, in order to report to him upon the strength of the troops opposed to him. He was to decide from these reports where to concentrate his troops and commence the attack. He sent me to Lille. I accompanied the reconnoitring party sent to Tournai, and commanded by General Lamarlière.

Our men were now to meet an enemy for the first time face to face, upon his own ground. We were not to precipitate a pitched battle ; our chief object was to gauge the strength of the enemy by the resistance opposed to us. We were very superior to them, besides which a strong reserve, following us at a distance, had orders to support our movements, or to receive us in case of a repulse. This was the last part played by this troop, commanded by Lieutenant-General la Bourdonnaie in person ; he bore the title of General-

commanding, but was subordinate to Dumouriez, who was a 'General of the Army' (*Général d'armée*), a rank corresponding to that of Marshal, which title had been abolished, though such as already bore it were allowed to keep it.

At the first gunshot, our reconnoitring party broke and fled to Lille, carrying with them the terror that had seized them. However, the enemy did not deploy more than twelve hundred men of all arms and two pieces of cannon, and I am confident that they had no more at that particular spot. Vainly did we try to stop our runaways; but the enemy did not advance much, and the reserve, on being brought up, made a good stand.

I reported the event, which was absolutely the second Pas de Baisieux on the frontier.* The Generals were kind enough to quote the efforts I had made to carry out the mission with which I was charged, as well as my demeanour during the skirmish, and, in truth, I was able to render some services upon this occasion. The receipt of complete intelligence satisfied us that the enemy's forces, commanded by Duke Albert of Saxe Teschen, were drawn up before us in an entrenched camp upon the heights of Mons and Berlaimont, covering the latter town, and General Dumouriez resolved upon giving battle.

* The Marshal here makes allusion to the rout of April 29, 1792, on the same ground, after which the fugitives, hurrying from Baisieux to Lille, massacred their General, Theobald Dillon.

After all our preparations were made, the army advanced and took up a position parallel to that of the entrenched camp. Orders were given along the lines for a general attack at noon on the following day. Every watch was set by that of the General in command. Feints were to be made upon the principal points on the frontier, and at the same time. It was somewhat late for a battle, but the plan had been regulated by the march of General d'Harville, who was bringing 10,000 men from the camp at Maubeuge, and was to turn Duke Albert's left wing.

A discharge from the twelve-pounder battery announced the hour of noon. The army advanced upon the enemy, and opened the attack with plenty of determination.* The firing became very brisk, and the resistance obstinate. Obstacles such as entrenchments, epaulments, coupures, abattis, and chevaux de frise, favoured the defence; they were difficult, but not insurmountable. However, our lines began to reel, and even to fall back. Dumouriez was at hand with a remedy; but General d'Harville, who was to support our right and turn the enemy's left, did not arrive, notwithstanding repeated orders to him to hasten his march. Our left did not advance; the General went to discover the reason, and recognised the difficulty of forcing the Austrians' right. Our advanced guard, commanded by Beurnonville, on

* Battle of Jemmappes, November 6, 1792.

the right of the line, had just been repulsed; a second charge had produced no better result. Our centre was stationary, and losing many men. The Duc de Chartres, who was commanding it, received orders to try to pierce that of the enemy, or so to fix their attention as to prevent them from withdrawing any men, while, with a few fresh troops, whom he would himself command, Dumouriez would make another effort on his right.

I had just informed him that the head of General d'Harville's column had appeared at last, but that he would require some hours and a little rest before he could execute the movement required of him, in order to turn the enemy's left from the formidable position it occupied. Dumouriez left me with the Duc de Chartres, who desired me to bring him a regiment of dragoons left in reserve. While this regiment was coming up, we saw Dumouriez and Beurnonville rush forward at the head of the advanced guard, and, after a feeble resistance on the part of the Austrians, we saw the advanced guard crowning the heights. This rapid and decisive attack, joined to the movement of D'Harville, who was advancing on our extreme right, appeared to decide the enemy to retreat, as they did not wish to expose themselves to having the road to Brussels closed against them, an operation which was clearly indicated by the movement of this body. The Duc de Chartres, as soon as he perceived the

progress and success of the advanced guard, ordered his troops to charge. The obstacles so long defended were overcome, and I myself led the regiment of dragoons at a gallop to the heights, where they still found some work to do; but we only entered Mons the next day, after the Austrians had evacuated it.

During the battle, Beurnonville received orders summoning him to take command of the Army of the Moselle. Dumouriez, who had appointed him Lieutenant-General, and hoped to keep him with his army, was displeased at this arrangement, and I was very vexed at it. However, there was nothing for it but to obey, and Beurnonville took leave of us, promising specially not to forget me.

The army continued its march, skirmishing as it went, and took up winter-quarters on the Meuse and the Roër, instead of pushing on to the Rhine. Dumouriez started for Paris, permitting me to accompany him. He only remained there just long enough to plan the invasion of Holland, and prolonged my leave.

While Dumouriez was subduing the fortresses on the Dutch frontier, the army left on the Roër and Meuse was surprised in its cantonments, and sought to rally on the hitherward side of Liège. Dumouriez received orders to hasten there. All officers on leave were ordered to join, and I was just preparing for my departure, when I learned that Beurnonville had arrived in Paris, and had

been appointed War Minister. I went to see and take my leave of him; but he retained me, and a few days later presented me with my appointment as Colonel of the Picardy regiment. Two important promotions in six months surely ought to have satisfied the most boundless ambition! I had no right to expect such a rapid rise, and was consequently the proudest and happiest man in the world. I could only hope, supposing that there had been any favouritism, any real friendship on the part of Beurnonville, that the regiment I was about to command would not find me unworthy of such a rank, especially as it was one of those that I had supported during our reconnoitring expedition at Tournai.

We soon had news of the loss of the battle of Neerwinde, and of Dumouriez's retreat. His enemies declared that treason had been at work; from that moment he was lost, and the important services he had rendered in Champagne, Flanders, and Belgium were forgotten. Such is the fate of men who serve revolutions! Mine only hung by a thread.

Scarcely had I crossed our frontier when I met bands of fugitives returning to France, and shouting national songs at the top of their voices. I reached Brussels, where I found the staff not yet recovered from the confusion consequent upon the loss of the battle. No one knew whither the troops had betaken themselves, especially the

Picardy regiment. Dumouriez was covering the army, or what remained of it, with the rear-guard, which was on its way back from Louvain, so I waited for him. Some hours later I was told that an officer had come from my regiment for orders; I sent it into temporary quarters in the neighbourhood of Tournai.

I saw Dumouriez on his arrival. He reproached me, as he had previously done Beurnonville, with having abandoned him. I answered that the friendship of the latter for me had caused him to reward and encourage some small efforts on my part, and that no doubt, under more fortunate circumstances, he (Dumouriez) would have obtained an appointment for me. I added that I was not abandoning him, as my regiment formed a part of his army. This reasoning soothed him. He talked over our unlucky position with me, begging me to hasten to my post, and desiring me to do my utmost to keep my regiment together, and to preserve it from the bad influences caused by the disorder into which everything had been thrown. I embraced him, and departed; each of us had tears in his eyes. Little did we think that this was our last farewell.

I reached my quarters, and made myself known, to the indignation of a Lieutenant-Colonel, who exclaimed to all who would listen to him that the most outrageous injustice had been done him by the appointment of a superior officer. He asked

for leave, which I granted him, and never reappeared.

As our retrograde movement continued, we did not stop till we were once more on our own territory. General Miaczinski's brigade, to which I belonged, came to Orchies. I was struck by the half-heartedness of the enemy, who never attacked us.

A few days later, while at dinner, a corporal of my regiment came to tell me that the War Minister was changing horses at the post-house, and desired to see me immediately. Surprised at this unexpected arrival, I went to him. After embracing me, he presented me to four Commissioners from the Convention, who questioned me as to our retreat. I was unable to give them much information, as I had only arrived a few days previously, a statement which was confirmed by the Minister. They were in a hurry to go on and fulfil their mission, the object of which was not disclosed to me. I questioned Beurnonville, but he also was discreet; he recommended me, however, to hold my regiment in readiness, as he would review it on his return from the head-quarters at Boues de St. Amand.

Next morning Miaczinski sent for me. I found him in great spirits. His room was full of officers, one of whom was reading aloud to the General a despatch that had just arrived. I gathered simply that the War Minister and the Commissioners had

been seized and taken to Tournai. Miaczinski ordered me to have my regiment under arms, adding that he would shortly send me further instructions. I ordered the assembly to be sounded, and all was ready in a few minutes. An aide-de-camp brought me verbal instructions to take command of the camp, to set the troops in motion, and march them towards Lille, whither the General would precede me. I sent forward my quarter-masters,* and we followed. A halt being necessary, I stopped at Pont-à-Marcq. Fresh orders from the General desired me to hasten my advance, and we started again. On the road, some of my officers informed me of what had happened at St. Amand; our General had made no secret of it, and it had gradually leaked out to the regiment. They tried to discover what I thought; my answer was simply that we had to obey orders without troubling ourselves about future events.

The head of the column had just reached the Faubourg des Malades (a suburb of Lille), when I received a note from Miaczinski ordering me to stop wherever this note reached me, to provide refreshment for my men, and not to leave them. They had just reached the glacis of the fortress. I ordered them to face about, according to the regulations, and pile their arms. No victuals! I

* Officers charged with the duty of furnishing provisions and lodgings.

sent to Lille for some. The gates and barriers were shut, and the drawbridges raised. This circumstance led me to the conclusion that something very unusual was taking place in the town, seeing that the gates of a fortified town are not shut, except for form's sake, on the arrival of a fresh garrison. The proximity of the enemy could not account for it, for we on the glacis were a goodly number of defenders. While I was discussing this strange reception with some of my officers, I was informed that a municipal official wished to see me. I went to him, and found him in considerable agitation. He told me that the council, assembled at the town-hall, wished to see me. I answered by showing him the note from the General, in which I was ordered not to leave my troops; that I presumed that the object of this municipal invitation was to concert measures for food and quarters; that the General was there as well as my quartermasters; that they should address themselves to him; that I only held the command in his absence; that I would send a Captain to supply my place, and to bring me back his orders.

Our disasters, which extended the whole length of our frontiers, and especially in the north, were all laid at the door of the leaders, and the policy of the day was rather to sacrifice them than to accuse the number of cowards who had brought them into such straits. That is why Dumouriez

was declared a traitor to his country. A decree of accusation had just been issued against him. The four Commissioners whom I have mentioned were sent to carry it out at head-quarters, and to bring Dumouriez to the bar of the Convention. Beurnonville was ordered to reorganize the army, of which he was to take command. Dumouriez, however, had been warned, and had taken such measures that, after an excited discussion with these gentlemen, he had caused them to be arrested and carried to Tournai. Here they were handed over to the enemy, with whom he had made a secret treaty whereby he was to be supported in his march upon Paris to upset the Convention.

After this *coup d'état*, trusting too implicitly upon the affection of his army, he divided it into several columns, which were to march upon the capital from different quarters, and, wishing at the same time to secure the northern strongholds, he ordered Miaczinski to take possession of them. The latter, who had a cause of complaint against the Commissioners, who had treated him very abruptly at Orchies on the preceding evening, because a detachment that was to escort them was not ready at the moment they wished to start, was enchanted at the prospect of having his revenge. He imparted his orders and all that had happened to those who were about him, and one of these, St. Georges, his friend, accompanied by the courier who had brought Dumouriez's orders

to Miaczinski, started immediately for Lille and warned the authorities of the danger threatening their town, and all the others in the department. Such were the reasons that had decided them to shut their gates. Poor Miaczinski, urged by a double desire to avenge himself and to lose no time in executing his orders, hastened thither, and thus rushed blindly on his ruin. He was to have had an interview with the general officer in command of the place, but the latter, warned by the information of St. Georges, hastened to join the civil authorities, who promptly took all the measures rendered necessary by the difficult circumstances in which they were placed.

While awaiting the return of the Captain whom I had despatched into the town, I learned the details of all that had happened at St. Amand, and the orders that had been given in consequence. My officer returned without any instructions for me. Night was coming on. The men, who had heard something of what was going on, put various interpretations upon the news, but I paid no heed to them. I was, however, in the utmost anxiety as to my position and that of my men, who were loudly complaining that they had a worse reception from their fellow-countrymen than they would have had from foreigners. They were ravenously hungry. This state of affairs could only end in a crisis, when they cried to us from the walls that the troops were to march to the

Faubourg de la Madeleine, where we should find rations, tents, victuals, etc. ; but that we must go round the glacis, as the gates were not allowed to be opened.

The men accordingly started, marching in a disorderly manner, which I could see from some distance off, but for which I could not account, until I came close up to them, when I discovered the reason. It was impossible to bring this multitude into order, so I contented myself with accompanying them. On reaching the gate of the Faubourg de Fives, we found the barrier of the glacis closed. We summoned them to open it, but our demand was refused. A voice from within the gate added that the Colonel of the Picardy regiment was to come at once to the assembled council. My grenadiers mutinied, and replied in the negative, adding that if their Colonel went they would go too. This was refused. I had nothing to reproach myself with. I at once determined upon going alone. The soldiers then raised very alarming cries, declaring, among other things, that these ——— had killed their poor Capet (Louis XVI.), and so on. They also began to shout, 'Long live the King!' I addressed them with severity, threatening them and pretending that I could recognise individual voices, which frightened them; and I then extracted from them a promise to remain quiet until my return. The barrier was opened for me, but

I was not even allowed to take with me a servant to hold my horse.

On passing under the gateway I was surrounded by about thirty men. The officer in charge said to me:

'Colonel, don't be afraid.'

'I have never been afraid of an enemy,' was my answer; 'why should I fear Frenchmen?'

I put several questions to him, but could get no intelligence.

I entered the great vestibule of the town-hall. All the authorities were assembled. The meeting was public, and a considerable number of inhabitants were present; profound silence reigned.

The president interrogated me. His first question was as to my Christian name and surname, rank, etc. I answered him.

'Are you in command of the troops on the glacis of the town?'

'Yes, in the absence of General Miaczinski, who must be here.'

I looked round for him, but failed to see him.

'By whose orders have you come?'

'By those of the General I have named.'

'Can you show us his order?'

'It was given by word of mouth. We were in camp. The General sent for me as the senior Colonel, and ordered me to put my men under arms. I obeyed, and immediately afterwards an aide-de-camp came and told me, on behalf of the

General, to march my troops forward to this town, whither he would precede me.'

'Did he tell you the reason for this movement?'

'No.'

'What did you think?'

'That, having entered this territory, provision was to be made to safeguard the different places, and that we were intended to defend your town.'

'What do your men say?'

'I cannot conceal from you that they are discontented. The grief caused by their reverses, the privations they have endured during the retreat, their fatigues; needs, devotion, all tended to make them anticipate help from their fellow-citizens; but, instead, they meet only distrust. They are saying very unfitting things, and I have had considerable difficulty in appeasing them. In order to calm them I said that in all probability you desired to concert with me as to the best means of satisfying their pressing wants, and that I would not delay in bringing them good news. Unless such be the case, I cannot answer for any disorders or excesses which they will most certainly commit.'

I called upon the officer who had come with me, and who had witnessed my efforts to calm the irritation of the men who had put their trust in me. He endorsed all that I had just said, and even went beyond it.

The president, who at first had addressed me very severely, seemed much appeased by my speech, and, when the officer had concluded his report, said to me:

'Colonel, return to your post; keep order among your men. Lead them to the camp of La Madeleine; you will there find provision for all your needs. Orders have been given that nothing should be left unprovided.'

I saluted the assembly and returned to the Faubourg de Fives.

'Well, my friends,' I said to the soldiers on my arrival, 'I knew that it was simply to discuss your needs.'

They all began to cry, 'Long live the Republic!'

Such is the inconstancy of the multitude.

'Forward!' I cried; 'we shall soon find plenty.'

But what was my disappointment and theirs! On reaching the place we found nothing. I sent to the town, and an answer was returned from the ramparts that it was too late that night, but that it should be attended to in the morning. On receiving this answer, I could no longer control my men. They broke away and dispersed, so much so that not a single soldier was left to guard the flag of the regiment, which I carried to the inn where I lodged.

I passed a wretched night, thinking over all the

disorder that might be brought about by such a state of things. Fortunately, there was less of it than might have been expected; but the town authorities were very much to blame—hunger has no ears.

Early next morning I caused the assembly to be sounded, and a few hours later I had gathered together nearly all my men. I was again summoned into the town, but this time I went with less anxiety. Fearing a fresh outbreak during my absence, I ordered that the men should remain under arms.

The meeting at the town-hall was less crowded, but I quickly perceived that the feeling was less friendly than it had been the previous night when I left the town. However, I was soon reassured by the advent of my friend Dupont,* Adjutant-General, an old comrade in the Maillebois regiment, charged by the authorities to settle with me all military details. We decided upon provisional cantonments until all that was necessary for a camp could be distributed.

* It was this General Dupont who afterwards capitulated at Baylen, and became War Minister at the first Restoration.

CHAPTER III.

General Lamarlière—Macdonald appointed Adjutant-General—Execution of Lamarlière—Skirmishes at Linselles and Commines—Entry into Lille—A Warlike Commissioner—Denunciation—A Loyal Friend—A Broken Reed—Extension of Command — General Pichegru — Belgium and Holland—Battle of Hooglède—On the Waal.

MEANWHILE, all the movements ordered by Dumouriez had been paralyzed. He himself ran great dangers, and was compelled, to save his head, to throw himself into the arms of the enemy, with whom, according to the admission made by himself in his memoirs, he had been treating secretly.

The General who succeeded him* sent General Lamarlière to take command of Lille and of the northern frontier. Immediately upon his arrival someone prejudiced him against the Picardy Colonel, whose name he did not even know. He was 'suspected.'† The General sent for the

* General Dampierre.

† Persons supposed not to be thoroughgoing revolutionists were regarded as 'suspicious,' and were commonly known as 'suspects.'—*Translator's Note.*

Colonel, and when I appeared, great was his surprise. He had not forgotten the Pas de Baisieux, where he had noticed me; and without further explanation said to me:

'Return to your post; I will defend you.'

This magnanimity touched me. He himself became shortly afterwards 'suspected,' and fell a victim, although innocent.

Fresh Commissioners came to Lille from the Convention. They were also biased, as General Lamarlière had been, against me. One of them had served as Captain in my regiment, and had but recently left it. He was an intimate friend of the Lieutenant-Colonel who was so vexed when I arrived to take over the command. This man chanced to be in Lille, profiting by the leave I had given him. He also took advantage of his friendship with the Commissioner to try to have me removed as a 'suspect,' owing to my having been aide-de-camp to Beurnonville and Dumouriez, the former of whom had also become 'suspected' since his arrest.

My conduct underwent severe inquiry. Poor General Lamarlière justified it, adding that I had ceased to be aide-de-camp some four or five months previously. As they could not hurt me on that score, they proposed to appoint me Adjutant-General (now called Staff-Colonel), a rank corresponding to that which I already held. My kind General Lamarlière spoke to me about it,

pointed out the danger of a refusal, and, regarding mere objections as equivalent to consent, announced my acceptance, without my leave, to the Commissioners.

The deed of appointment was then and there drawn up, for they had plenary powers, and worded in very complimentary terms, based upon my excellent conduct, my patriotism, etc. Armed with this document, I went straight to the General, and, while thanking him for his kindness, declared that I could not take advantage of it; that in the eyes of the army it would appear that I was incapable of commanding a regiment; that my susceptibilities were wounded, my honour compromised, and that I would rather be deprived of my command altogether; that he, whose own feelings were of the keenest and most honourable, could, better than anyone else, feel for my position; that I already owed so much to him that I should be glad to increase my debt by another service, and, as I saw that he did not insist, I added:

'Besides, it will be just as much to the interest of the Commissioners as to mine to let this affair go no further, seeing that the dullest individual will easily understand that they are protecting private and not public interests' (they had appointed the Lieutenant-Colonel to succeed me). 'Moreover, this officer is unpopular with the regiment; he is narrow-minded and ill-tempered.'

I ended by saying that if they thought I should make a good Adjutant-General, I considered that I could render more service at the head of a regiment.

'By the way,' I exclaimed, 'why should they not give him the title they have conferred upon me? He wants to be Colonel. Well and good, his ambition would be gratified.'

This idea had not occurred to Lamarlière. It seemed to strike him, and he said:

'Give me the letter containing the orders, and your commission. I will take them to the Commissioners, and beg them to make the exchange you propose.'

'No, certainly not. I cannot part with them. They are much too flattering, and, besides, they are my justification.'

The Commissioners could find no serious objection to the plan proposed by the General. It was adopted, and I was left in peace.

I occupied myself seriously, with ardour and activity, in exercising and drilling my regiment, and in accustoming it to warfare by marches and reconnaissances on the frontier. The enemy occupied the adjacent woods, and I sometimes obtained some little success in skirmishing. Other corps followed my example, and we thus accustomed our men to see and face the enemy. I forgot to say that my regiment had been divided. I had but one battalion; the second was with the

Army of the Moselle, and the Commissioners had appointed a Colonel to it. All communications ceased between us as soon as our accounts were settled.

Another Captain belonging to the regiment, named Béru, who was away on leave, returned to Lille. He was also an intimate friend of the Commissioner, and was by him made General of Brigade, and had command, under Lamarlière, of the troops collected in our camp. Thus I saw one of my subordinates put over my head; however, I made the best of it, and set the example of obedience.

The new General came to the camp with some prejudices against me. A straightforward explanation ensued; he was honest, and we became and remained friends. Shortly afterwards General Lamarlière was deprived of his command, arrested, and taken before the revolutionary tribunal, to which he soon fell a victim. I regretted him deeply. My superior Captain succeeded him with the rank of General of Division, and I was appointed General of Brigade.*

This came upon me like a thunderbolt, as, although for several months past I had performed the duties of the office, I had not had the responsibilities attaching to the rank. I represented that

* He received this appointment from Houchard, Commander-in-chief, and it was confirmed by the representatives with the Army of the North, Levasseur and Bentabole, August 26, 1793.

I was youthful and inexperienced, but they would not listen. I had to bow to their decision under pain of being treated as a 'suspect,' and arrested. I resigned myself accordingly. My Captain, now General of Division, who had also made some observations on his own account, was not listened to either, so we agreed to help each other mutually.

I was sent to command the frontier from Menin to Armentières, and my quarters were fixed at Lannoy, if I remember rightly, for I have no map at hand.

Partial and simultaneous attacks were made almost daily at Linselles, Commines, Blaton, Pont-Rouge, etc., and almost invariably terminated in our favour, which gained me some reputation.* These attacks were but the prelude to a real onslaught, which the enemy at last made, advancing with a large body of troops against my lines. Linselles, Commines, and Blaton were all carried at once. The General of Division and I consulted together. He sent me some reinforcements, raised his camp at La Madeleine, marched upon Linselles and Jupon, Commines and Blaton. Having made all my dispositions, I charged the enemy with the bayonet. They retreated; we pursued eagerly. We regained possession of the two places, and our success was crowned by a large number of killed, wounded, and prisoners. We got ten pieces of cannon, all the ammunition,

* These combats occurred in August, 1793.

baggage, etc. Affairs went otherwise at Linselles, where we lost the same number of guns. My poor General was in despair. He came to see me, and I consoled him as best I could; and before he left me, we learned that the enemy had retired from Linselles, which comforted him.

We entered Lille in triumph with our captures, so as to dissipate the bad impression caused by the reverses at Linselles. Everyone hailed us as victors; my troops who had taken part were intoxicated, and, to say the truth, I enjoyed the moment as much as anyone, though as modestly as possible. My name appeared honourably mentioned in the official despatches, and this caused me to be regarded as an important person, and roused jealousy and enmity against me.

After these events I daily harassed the enemy, but they had caused so much vexation to the General of Division that he asked permission to retire, which was granted.

The four Commissioners, to my great bliss, had been recalled or sent elsewhere; they were replaced by another, who, having heard of my success at Commines, and other partial successes, wished for my personal acquaintance. I went to Lille, where he received me with civility, returning my visit a few days later; the outposts thought he was making an inspection. In this interview he expressed to me his desire to be

present at a little brush with the enemy. I undertook that he should see one, and promised to let him know the day, hour, and place at which it should occur.

The enemy had replaced by fresh troops those that had received the check related above; among the newcomers was a regiment commanded by the Duke of York. They swaggered considerably, and gave themselves great airs, and I determined to give them a lesson. Having made all my preparations, and taken my precautions, I sent word to the Commissioner, who arrived in hot haste towards the end of the affair. He saw the rout of the enemy, and a good many prisoners taken, after we had killed and wounded a considerable number. He had heard balls and bullets whistle past him, and was beside himself with joy. I asked leave to quote his name in my report; he himself drew one up in which he praised me, and was not too modest about his own share. Finally, when the action was over, and my troops were recalled, he complimented them, gave me the kiss of fraternity, and said aloud that I might count upon him till death. Such protection was by no means to be despised during those horrible times of revolutionary crises, and I thought myself safe from all anxieties, whatever denunciations might be brought against me from whatever quarter.

I have said that the General of Division had retired; while awaiting the appointment of his

successor, the General in command at Lille held his place. The successor came at last. He was General Souham, who struck up a friendship with me which still endures. Being easy in his mind as to the point where I commanded, he turned his attention to the others, and left me a free hand. Security was re-established upon part of the frontier, and I was determined to see that it was respected.

It was then that the good idea occurred of amalgamating all the volunteer battalions, whether of old or new formation, with the regulars, putting two of the former to one of the latter, and I was charged to carry out the operation; but such confusion reigned that nobody seemed to know where these battalions were quartered, because, as it transpired, if they did not like the place where they had been sent, or if it did not suit them, they moved on somewhere else without giving any notice, so that I was ordered to travel through all the neighbouring departments, in order to send in as many battalions as possible to Lille.

While these events were in progress, two new Extraordinary Commissioners arrived, with very extended powers. I had been denounced to them; their first act was intended to be my disgrace, arrest, and eventual arraignment before the revolutionary tribunal at Arras, from which no one ever escaped.

I admit that I had made a terrible enemy of a

republican and superlatively revolutionary General by laughing at him for cowardice in a skirmish at Menih. He had become the butt and laughing-stock of the troops, even of those who shared his opinions. It was he, moreover, who had denounced and ruined poor General Lamarlière; but Divine justice allowed him to perish eventually by the same means.

Another enemy whom I strongly suspected was a former and very bad comedian, now a General commanding a revolutionary army,* who used a seal engraved with a guillotine, but who nevertheless pretended some friendship for me. His functions, however, and his intimacy with the other, left me no doubt, and I received a warning. I despised these men too much to pay the least attention; I was wrong, and too self-confident, for in those terrible times a clear conscience, upright conduct, without blot or blemish, were no guarantees; they only excited jealousy by making others ashamed.

General Souham fought loyally and generously against the accusations, denunciations, etc., and succeeded in staving off the execution of the warrant against me until the return of the Commissioners, who were to go to Dunkirk in order to see and hear me. I was in ignorance of all that was being plotted against me, and was quite comfortable in my quarters, when the General

* It was not the revolutionary army of Ronsin and Rossignol, which was specially attached to the Northern district.

sent for me and told me of all that had happened. He then added :

'Look here, you are done for; therefore consider what steps you had better take, and decide quickly, for you are going to be suspended from duty.'

He then advised me to put myself out of the reach of the warrant, the execution of which was only postponed. The Commissioners, in granting the delay, had imperiously demanded that my command should be taken from me, and that Lille should be my temporary prison. Therefore it was open to me to go abroad. But if I did, what should I do? What would become of me? I should have found numerous enemies among the emigrants, who never forgave those who refused to join them in 1791.

I then had recourse to the papers given to me when I was appointed Adjutant-General, and which I had kept.

'They will be no use to you,' said Souham. 'The very men who signed them are now "suspects" themselves.'

'There is my friend the warlike Commissioner,' said I. 'I will go and see him.'

'He!' replied Souham. 'Why, he was present at the discussion. I called upon him to speak up for you, but he was silent.'

'Never mind,' I answered; 'maybe he was intimidated by the presence of his colleagues and

superiors. I should like to try him, and perhaps inspire him with a little pluck, if he wants it.'

'Go and try,' was the answer, 'and then come back to me.'

I departed in search of my friend.

'Look here! you know that I have fallen into disgrace, and I have come to ask your help. I thought that my conduct and services would save me, but I learn that damaging suspicions have been sown broadcast by enemies who remain in shadow, concealed like those whom we are fighting every day.'

'Indeed!' he replied. 'Do you wish me to speak quite openly to you? I tell you you are not a republican, and I neither can nor will mix myself up with you.'

'But,' I answered, 'I have not changed, as far as I know, since the day when we met on the frontier at the skirmish at Commines; and on that occasion you assured me publicly——'

'I remember what you mean,' he said roughly, interrupting me; 'but times are changed,' and thereupon he turned on his heel.

I returned directly to Souham and related this conversation to him. He implored me to take some steps for my safety.

'They are already taken,' I said. 'I will be, if necessary, one of the thousand victims sacrificed daily. I shall remain.'

'But have you thought it over carefully and weighed all the consequences?'

'Yes.'

I was right in acting as I did. The Extraordinary Commissioners were recalled to Paris from Dunkirk, and I was sent back to my post and forgotten.

I continued to maintain respect for the frontier under my command, which was considerably extended. In it was included all the territory between Armentières and the sea, and my headquarters were moved to Cassel. Although I was only General of Brigade, I had eleven of the same rank under my control, and about forty thousand men scattered over this long frontier-line, which vastly increased my responsibility.

I had made representations with a view to being relieved, for, notwithstanding this force, scattered as it was, we were weak everywhere. A promise had been given me that I should be replaced by the first General of Division who should arrive, and I experienced great satisfaction when he was at length announced to me. I was to have returned to my former quarters, but my destination was altered, and this change of plans was coloured by a representation as to the necessity of repairing some checks that one of my comrades had received. As a matter of fact, this comrade had started in his career with the rank of General, and his troops had no confidence in him. I took his place, and the command extended from Menin to Tournai.

About this time serious thoughts arose as to the advisability of assembling the whole army and taking the offensive. For this purpose a new Commander-in-chief* came down, accompanied by two Extraordinary Commissioners. A decree had just been published ordering all 'nobles' to move thirty leagues from the frontiers, to quit the army and Paris. Under these circumstances I ought to have retired. I had furnished the head-quarters staff with all the information in my possession upon the frontier, the enemy, their strength, positions, weapons, etc. My services and conduct had also been mentioned with praise, and the Commander-in-chief begged the Commissioners to retain me, and exempt me from this measure. They desired me to come to them, and informed me that, by virtue of their plenary powers, they required my services. I answered that I wished nothing better, and that they might count upon my zeal and my efforts, but that they should give me a written commission. I added that, should we have the misfortune to meet with reverses, I should assuredly be accused of treachery, and of having remained with the army in order to secure its defeat, notwithstanding the decree of expulsion. Despite my arguments, they refused to satisfy me, whereupon I said:

'So be it. I shall send in my resignation.'

* General Pichegru.

'If you leave the army, we will have you arrested and brought to trial.'

I had no choice but to submit, so I remained where I was, in spite of the twofold odds against me.

Success alone could ensure my position and save me. After various ups and downs, Victory at length declared herself for us. I took the most important part at Lannoy, Roubaix, Tourcoing; at the battle of Hooglède, where I was alone in command;* at the capture of Ypres, Menin, Courtrai, Ostend, Ghent; at the passage of the Scheldt, and of the canal at Mechlin; then at the taking of Antwerp; at the battles of Turnhout and Boxtel; at the capture of Bois-le-Duc, which the Dutch did me the honour of attributing to me because I had been in their service and garrisoned there, though in truth I did nothing but cover the besiegers; and finally at the passage of the Meuse and the taking of Nimeguen.

The Waal stopped us. We took up quarters for the winter, which promised to be very severe. Mine were temporarily at Kronenburg. While there I received, most unexpectedly, and above all, without wishing for or desiring it, my commission as General of Division,† and my quarters were shifted to Nimeguen.

* At the battle of Hooglède, fought on the 26 Prairial, year iii. (June 13, 1794), Macdonald commanded the centre.

† 8 Frimaire, year iii. (November 28, 1794).

CHAPTER IV.

Passage of the Waal—Its Results—Reconnaissance at Arnheim —Arrival at Naarden—Capitulation of Naarden—On the Banks of the Yssel—Delfzyl—The Peace of Basle—Command in Overyssel—Ordered to Walcheren—Fever—Removal to Utrecht—Convalescence.

PICHEGRU, the new Commander-in-chief, being ill, had retired to Brussels, and the command was meanwhile made over to Moreau, the senior General of Division; the latter's division was added to mine, which extended my command from Fort St. André to Urdingen, where I joined the left of the Army of the Sambre and Meuse, now in position on the Rhine. We took advantage of this interruption of operations to revictual our troops and reorganize them, and to train and discipline our recruits.

We had no means, no possibility of crossing the Waal, a considerable river, whose right bank was defended by fortified dykes. The forts of Knodsenburg, opposite Nimeguen, and Kekerdam, opposite Kronenburg, were well armed. We constantly exchanged shots along the entire line; from one point of view this meant a considerable

waste of ammunition; from another, however, it gave us a valuable chance of familiarizing our new recruits with the fire of the enemy.

The frost came to our assistance. I had the ice sounded two or three times a day. As regards provisions we were unfortunately situated; our communications with our stores at Antwerp and Bois-le-Duc were cut off, the bridge had been destroyed, and the country between the Meuse and the Waal was exhausted, while we could only get very slender resources from our right towards Cleves. I myself was reduced to regimental bread and cheese, and that only occasionally. The Nimeguen shopkeepers had closed their doors, as we could only offer them assignats,* which they would not accept. We were compelled, therefore, to leave our present quarters and cross the river in search of plenty.

All my preparations for crossing the river were made, and instructions given to start at the first signal. The ice was thickening, and we observed that the enemy were making ready to retire, as we imagined, when I suddenly received intelligence that they had evacuated Thiel, opposite Fort St. André. I saw with my own eyes a cannon being removed from the right bank. Never doubting that a retreat had been determined upon; the General in command at that point received orders to cross the river, now sufficiently frozen, and to follow the

* Paper-money of the Revolution.—*Translator's note.*

enemy, who had taken the direction of Arnheim. I signalled to the rest of the troops that they were to attempt the passage at the points indicated. All the columns moved forward simultaneously at break of day, and crossed the river, almost without resistance, somewhat above and below Nimeguen. The stream had not frozen in the middle of the town. As soon as I could distinguish through the fog the head of the first column nearing the fort by the dyke, I caused several skiffs that I had previously prepared to be launched, and crossed to the other side with two companies of grenadiers. The fort had just been evacuated. I ordered my men to pursue slowly, so as to give time for all our columns to come up with us, and for the cannon to pass. That was the difficulty. The small ordnance was brought up without trouble, then the larger, and finally the howitzers.

During this operation we heard a violent explosion, which made the very ground tremble. It was, as I imagined, the enemy blowing up their magazines and setting their camp on fire. Fearing lest this terrible explosion might astonish the troops, I sent the Generals, who had come to take my orders, to their posts, desiring them to explain this event, which signified the absolute retreat of the enemy, and to watch our right, while I took upon myself the charge of the centre.

They arrived just in time, for a hot and well-sustained fire had broken out. My troops were

engaged and attacked by a considerable force. The right division had only succeeded in putting one regiment across, and was repulsed on the left bank of the river; but the General who had provisional command of this division arrived with two other brigades, rallied the first, and finally, after a severe struggle, broke the enemy's ranks. The intermediate division, which was mine, had left its place, and so had the centre, where I was; we were without news from the left. I advanced my lines as far as the Linge, the point which I had named in my orders as that at which we were to concentrate.

This day brought about two important results: first, it facilitated the invasion of Holland by separating her cause from that of her allies, who were forced to evacuate the country; secondly, it put into our hands at least a hundred pieces of cannon, with which the dykes and fort of Knodsenburg, which served us as a *tête-de-pont*,* were armed, besides ammunition and a large number of prisoners.

This event proves that in war it is necessary on many occasions to trust to chance; for I repeat now what I said at the time, that I owed more to luck than to wisdom, although success is generally supposed to depend upon plans, schemes, and arrangements. On this occasion the evacuation of Thiel seemed to me the evident result of a retro-

* Works covering the approach to a bridge.

grade movement, whereas in reality that movement was caused by a misunderstanding. The General commanding my left wing had conscientiously carried out his instructions, and begun his march, when he met the evacuating body, who, having notified their retreat, received injunctions to return to the post they had quitted. But it was too late—the place was already occupied. The two bodies marching in contrary directions met, and an engagement was the result; but, notwithstanding the numerical superiority of their adversaries, our men kept their ground. The successful crossing of the Waal above and below Nimeguen, together with the advantages gained by my extreme right, which took the offensive after its first brigade had been repulsed, checked the enemy who were opposed to them and broke their lines. Our success was complete. Shortly afterwards the enemy's corps sent to Thiel was recalled to Arnheim. This is a very simple explanation of the reasons that caused my left to remain stationary; it could not come up or set out for the Linge until the following day.

I went to Nimeguen to make my report. The Commander-in-chief* and the Commissioners came to meet me. I was almost ashamed to receive their congratulations, because chance had had a much greater share in the success of the day than my combinations, which, as a matter of fact, were only founded upon the apparent retreat of the

* Pichegru had returned from Brussels.

forces opposed to me, who in reality had no idea of such a thing; but the manner I had adopted in spreading out my lines, and the various points I had attacked, had made the enemy believe that they were bearing the brunt of the whole French army, while their own was scattered over a wide extent of territory.

Next evening, towards dusk, we made a reconnaissance in the direction of Arnheim. The noise and shouting that we heard, combined with the accounts of some deserters and country folk, confirmed our unanimous opinion that a general retreat was going on, and the Commander-in-chief gave his orders in consequence. We were, however, too weak to pursue the enemy, invade Holland, and surround the strongholds at one and the same time. This condition of affairs was explained to the Commissioners, and they were requested to write to their colleagues with the Army of the Sambre and Meuse, to which we had now come very close; while our Commander-in-chief asked his colleague* to lend him for the time two divisions to replace those under my command. This request, approved by the Commissioners, was granted without delay, and I quitted my position in order to strengthen my left.

A general movement had been caused on the one side by the enemy's retreat, and on the other by the general advance of the army. I crossed

* General Jourdan.

the Leck at Amerungen without meeting any enemies, and advanced towards Amersfort, after having turned the lines of the Greb, armed with two hundred guns. The Dutch troops were drawing away from their allies, but being too weak to make a stand against us, they retired into fortresses or distant provinces.

None of our corps remained long bivouacked. They only needed a few hours' rest, for great emulation existed as to who should first reach and take Amsterdam. I did not waste any time, but I had a diagonal line to follow, while the others could march straight ahead. The floods were out and the roads under water, but that was no obstacle, on account of the frost. I arrived in front of Naarden, one of the strongest places in Europe, on the ice. This is the masterpiece of Cohorn, emulator and rival of Vauban;* but the water, the principal defence of the place, was now useless. I invested it, and ordered the gates to be opened. The garrisons had orders to commit no act of hostility, to offer no resistance, and to make the best terms possible. They therefore parleyed with us.

The cold was very sharp, and we warmed our-

* Cohorn (1641-1704) was a famous Dutch engineer and General of artillery, and was afterwards made Governor of Flanders. He defended Namur against Louis XIV. Vauban (1633-1707) fortified Dunkirk, Lille, Maestricht, Ghent, etc., and was created a Marshal of France by Louis XIV.—*Translator's note.*

selves at our bivouacs on the ice. My injunctions were to agree to everything, provided that the place were handed over to me on the spot. The articles of capitulation were at length signed, and I took possession of the town. As I reached the gates, a Dutch officer, who had just been replaced by one of ours, and who was drunk, threw himself at the feet of one of my aides-de-camp, exclaiming:

'Brave republican, I owe you my life!"

Observe that we had fired neither cannon nor musket, and that we had not even drawn our swords from their scabbards!

At sunrise next day, leaving a strong garrison at Naarden, I started for Amsterdam, and on the road learned that the capital of Holland had been occupied by our troops the previous evening. Mine thus became useless, so I sent them into cantonments, going myself to Amsterdam to take the news of the capitulation of Naarden, and to receive fresh orders. On arriving in presence of the General in command, I presented him with the signed articles. He answered jokingly:

'I pay no attention now to anything less than the surrender of Provinces!'

As a matter of fact, and since the general capitulation of the Netherlands, with the exception of a few places still held by the enemy, my conquest decreased in importance, whereas under other circumstances it would have redounded to the credit of the General who had succeeded in

bringing it to submission. It was against this very place that Louis XIV. with all his might, and himself there in person, failed.

I received orders to retire, to make for the Yssel, to take possession of Harderwick, Kampen, Zwolle, Zutphen, Deventer, and to replace the troops of the Sambre and Meuse Army at Arnheim. The enemy retreated at our approach.

The weather had become milder during my short stay at Amsterdam, and the thaw had begun. It was thawing rapidly when I reached the Yssel, and the ice had broken in several places, causing a dyke to burst. The bridge of boats at Kampen could not be removed, and the ice accumulated round it. Half my men had already crossed; the remainder had halted, on learning from the inhabitants that they could only cross at imminent risk, as the bridge must infallibly be carried away. At this moment I came up. Reflecting that the troops already on the other side ran a great risk of falling into the hands of the enemy, I determined to chance it, and gave orders to advance, rapidly crossing the bridge, which was already much strained. The bridge bore us because the waters that had carried away the dyke on the right bank had found an outlet, and were spreading over the country; but then we incurred another danger, that, namely, of inundation. However, all my men got safely across; we reached higher ground, and escaped with nothing worse than wet feet.

Having thus carried out my orders, I received fresh ones to drive the enemy out of the provinces of Frisia, Groningen and Drenthe. This portion of the campaign was very difficult because of the thaw; the roads were shocking, and for the most part under water. The country through which we were marching was perfectly flat. We had to redouble our speed and activity, so as to prevent the enemy from fortifying and victualling Groningen, Delfzyl, and Coevorden. Frisia, owing to its situation, had been already evacuated, but the inhabitants of Groningen came to me very frequently, imploring me to hasten our march, and to deliver them from our common enemies, as they expressed it; in making this request they were almost asking for a change of enemies, although my troops kept most rigorous discipline. My advance-guard entered the town as the enemy quitted it. We pursued, overtook, and defeated their rear-guard near Delfzyl. At the same time I heard that Coevorden had opened its gates, and I extended my line as far as the Ems, which the enemy had recrossed. We respectively took up our positions on either side of the river, having, both of us, great need of rest.

While I was inspecting my lines, I was informed of the march of the Prussian army, and shortly afterwards a messenger with a flag of truce* brought

* The bearer of a flag of truce is called in French *un parlementaire*, for which we have no concise English equivalent. I shall therefore in future use the word *parlementaire* without further explanation.—*Translator's note.*

me a letter announcing that the latter Power had just concluded the Peace of Basle;* but as I had no official notification, I at once communicated with the Commander-in-chief, who was also in ignorance of the event. I asked for large reinforcements, and meanwhile kept a very strict look-out. Two fresh divisions were sent to join and precede me, and these would not have been too many had the first news of this unexpected peace proved untrue, because the Prussians would have effected a junction with the allied army that I already had in front of me. We at length received confirmation of the news, to the great joy of both sides.

The line of demarcation laid down by the treaty followed the right bank of the Rhine and the Ems to its mouth; the Prussians took the place of their former allies on this bank, while we occupied the left. Territorial divisions were formed, of which I had command of the first, composed of the provinces of Drenthe, Frisia, and Groningen, and I established my head-quarters in the town of that name.

After three months' rest, of which we all stood in great need, I was called to the command of the provinces of Overyssel and Gueldres, and later on to Utrecht and Holland.

Zealand being at this time threatened by the

* The treaty of peace between France and Prussia was signed on the 16 Germinal, year iii. (April 5, 1795).

English, I was ordered to go either to Middleburg or Flushing, whichever I preferred, in the island of Walcheren, and a most unhealthy country. Five-sixths of my men were soon down with fever, and I was so violently attacked that, in fear of my life, I was ordered back to France to recover. All the events I have just described occurred in the years 1794-5. It was towards the end of the latter year that I returned to France, where my fever, which had been somewhat checked before I left Flushing, seized me again at the end of six weeks.

By the end of the summer, 1795, I had recovered, and was ready to return to my duty, when I had the pleasure of greeting Beurnonville, who had just been exchanged and restored from his captivity. The command of the army in Holland had been given to him. He offered to exchange with me. I refused from a mistaken sense of delicacy, on account of our friendship, fearing lest this preference should prejudice other Generals against him.

Scarcely had I returned first to Flushing, and then to Middleburg, when, coming back from a tour of inspection round the island, I was again seized with fever, and notwithstanding all the measures employed, especially quinine in large quantities, it could not be subdued until the following spring, when the doses were trebled, and I was removed from that horrible climate.

My friend Beurnonville had his headquarters at Utrecht. He summoned me thither to recover. I had to diet myself very severely; but my relapses, though still acute, were but the prelude to a fresh attack, which I believe has remained unparalleled. Beurnonville was away at the time. On hearing of the danger I was in, he hastened back at once. At length skill and perseverance checked the fever, and I was sent to pass my convalescence at Deventer, in Overyssel, where troops were assembling for the manœuvres at Gorssel. They were put under my command. I spared no pains to instruct and train them, and thus got much exercise, which was good for my health. Beurnonville came to inspect us.

CHAPTER V.

Army of the Sambre and Meuse—Donauwerth—Operations on the Rhine—Neuwied—Mistake of General Castelvert—His Excuse and Recall—At Düsseldorf—Fresh Hostilities on the Rhine—Arrival of General Augereau—Politeness and Literary Attainments of General Lefebvre — Macdonald Summoned to Paris.

We foresaw that we should be called ere-long to play a part in the events that were in progress on the other side of the Rhine. The Army of the Sambre and Meuse was commanded by General Jourdan, that of the Rhine by General Moreau; each acted without any unity or consideration for the movements of the other. The new campaign had opened brilliantly and decisively, but this, unfortunately, did not last long. A clever and well-designed feint on the part of the Archduke Charles of Austria deceived General Moreau. He (the Archduke) unexpectedly crossed the Danube at Donauwerth, and fell, with overwhelming numbers, upon the right flank of the Sambre and Meuse Army, which was on the Rednitz, while that which General Jourdan was driving from the Rhine

suddenly turned and retaliated in front. The inequality of numbers and the extent of ground occupied by the French army compelled a retreat.

Prompt succour was necessary. In September, 1796, the camp at Gorssel was raised and set in motion, as well as another division of the Army of the North stationed in Belgium. The latter advanced to the *tête-de-pont* at Neuwied, while, with the former, I advanced to the enormous entrenched camp at Düsseldorf. During our march the Sambre and Meuse Army, being hard pressed, drew back towards the Lahn, where it proposed to remain until our arrival.

General Castelvert, who commanded the Belgian division, was ordered to put himself in line on the right of this army, touching the division temporarily under the command of General Marceau, which extended along the right bank of the Lahn as far as its mouth. General Castelvert's orders, in case the enemy should force the passage of the river, were to retire to the *tête-de-pont* of Neuwied, and to preserve that post on the Rhine at all costs. For this he was to answer with his head. Completely engrossed with this responsibility, he learned that the enemy had taken possession of the town of Nassau, and, without reflecting that this town was situated on the left bank, and that its occupation was consequently immaterial to his position, he hastily retreated to the *tête-de-pont*

without giving notice to General Marceau,* and thus left absolutely uncovered the extreme right of the Sambre and Meuse Army, which that very day was defeated and compelled to retire. This army, of course, threw all the blame upon Castelvert, and there is no doubt that he had committed a serious blunder in compromising his position. The excuse that he made to me is too curious not to be quoted.

'Why,' I asked him, 'did you retire without being compelled to do so, and without giving any notice?'

'There!' he replied. 'Of course they want to throw all the blame for their defeat upon the Army of the North; but they were dying to have an excuse to get away, and as they were retreating eight leagues, surely I had a right to retreat ten, and be d——d to them!'

He was recalled.

I advanced from Düsseldorf to Mülheim, but the enemy left us in peace on the Wupper and the Sieg. General Beurnonville succeeded General Jourdan, bringing with him imperative and reiterated orders to take the offensive; but over and above the lateness of the season, the Army of the Sambre and Meuse was really not in a condition

* This General was mortally wounded on September 20, 1796. His remains rest in French territory in Germany on the banks of the Rhine. The spot was recently visited, we believe, by President Carnot.

to advance; it had scarcely anything. A tacit understanding was arrived at between the two opposing Generals to the effect that the troops should have a rest on condition of ten days' notice being given on each side should either Government order the reopening of hostilities. I took up my quarters on the right bank of the Rhine, touching on my left the line of demarcation settled by the Prussians at the Treaty of Basle. I established my headquarters at Düsseldorf, and thus we passed the winter.

In February, 1797, I recrossed the Rhine, in order to execute a mission in Belgium, leaving my command at Düsseldorf to General of Division Desjardins, and that of my titular division to General of Brigade Gouvion. In my absence the troops of the Army of the North were echeloned from Düsseldorf to Arnheim. I rejoined at Nimeguen.

Hostilities broke out afresh upon the Rhine. General Hoche was in command of the Sambre and Meuse Army, when he died suddenly. I have never heard that the cause of his death was cleared up. It was said that he had been poisoned by an opposing faction. This *corps d'armée* of the North, under my orders, returned to the Rhine; but on the road we heard of the Treaty of Campo Formio, which stopped the Armies of the Rhine and of the Sambre and Meuse in the thick of their successes.

A political revolution occurred in Paris,* and General Augereau came to take command of the three armies reunited under the name of the Army of Germany. He reviewed us at Cologne, and was struck with the smart appearance of the Army of the North, directly under my orders. Instead of praising it, he said :

'I observe and understand that these troops are drilled in the Prussian manner, but I will soon put a stop to that.'

A halt was called before the march past. The soldiers crowded round the new Commander-in-chief. His dress was startling ; he was covered with gold embroidery even down to his short boots, thus contrasting strongly with our simple uniforms. He related his Italian campaigns, spoke of the bravery of the troops, but without even mentioning the leader of that army.† He said that the soldiers were very well treated there, and that there was not a man among them, bad character as he might be, who had not ten gold pieces in his pocket and a gold watch. This was a hint to our fellows.

On one occasion the theatrical manager came to offer him a choice of plays. He insisted on something very revolutionary, and chose, if I remember rightly, either 'Brutus' or the 'Death

* The *coup d'état* of the 18 Fructidor, to which Augereau had given his support.

† Bonaparte.

of Cæsar.'* General Lefebvre, who had held the command temporarily, was his principal lieutenant. Trigny, commandant of Cologne, had offered his carriage, in the hope, probably, that the Commander-in-chief would give a seat in it to his wife. This idea, however, never seemed to occur to the latter, so Trigny very respectfully suggested it. Lefebvre, seated beside General Augereau, put his head out of window, and inquired:

'What did you say?'

Trigny repeated his proposition.

'Go to blazes!' replied Lefebvre; 'we did not come here to take your wife out driving!'

Lefebvre, who had not the remotest acquaintance with literature, applauded heartily with his clumsy hands, believing that the play had been written that very morning in honour of the occasion. He kept nudging me with his elbow, and asking:

'Tell me, where is the chap who wrote this? Is he present?'

On the conclusion of peace, I think in November, I returned to Holland. General Beurnonville was recalled. General Dejean, who held the command provisionally, made it over to me, and I exercised it through the winter, until the moment when General Joubert came to take it over permanently, and I received orders to go to Paris.

* Both by Voltaire.

CHAPTER VI.

Ordered to Italy—The Army of Rome—General Championnet—Insurrection in Rome—Championnet's Flight—Evacuation of Rome—General Mack—Nepi and Otricoli—Differences with Championnet—Explanation.

In the spring of 1798 I was ordered to betake myself to Italy. The Egyptian expedition was prepared and ready to set sail. I had no doubt that at Milan I should receive orders to go either to Genoa or Civita-Vecchia. I had been able to gain no intelligence in Paris, but on arriving I found, with pleasure, that the expedition had already started.

Italy was denuded of troops. They had all been embarked, but more were expected from the interior of France. General Brune, who was in command, allowed me to make a journey to Rome and Naples. I passed two well-employed months in the first-named city, but was refused permission to enter Neapolitan territory, as I was both a Frenchman and a soldier. I returned to Milan, whence I made various excursions, one of which was nearly fatal to me. I was almost drowned

while bathing in the canal at Mantua. General Delmas, then in command, rendered me every service that friendship could suggest—he has since been killed in Saxony—and Mayer, now General, saved my life.

Shortly afterwards I was sent to Rome to take up a command under General Gouvion St. Cyr. He was, I believe, at that time engaged in a quarrel with the Commissioners of the Directory; he was recalled, and I succeeded him.

The Roman States had been erected into a republic, and were then in a state of ferment. Their neighbours, the Neapolitans, were threatening. Austria sent the famous General Mack to command their army, while she herself was making ready to break the Peace of Leoben. Partial insurrections and considerable risings took place, especially at Terracina. I suppressed and kept them under. These events were merely the precursors of much more serious and important matters. I administered the country under the eye of the Commissioners, but not in blind accordance with their wishes or authority, although the latter was very limited.

I had but 12,000 men under me, but they were good, trustworthy troops. In my correspondence I informed the Government and the Commander-in-chief of the army in Italy of our situation. I begged for speedy reinforcements, but no one would believe the danger imminent, albeit it was

apparent. I had arranged my men so as to be ready for any emergency. The Neapolitans were organized under no less a chief than General Mack, whose reputation was almost European (and who by no means justified it, whether at the head of the Neapolitans, or later on when in command of the Austrian army), and at that time he had not the difficulties to contend with that he had in later years.

An 'Army of Rome' was created in Paris and a leader appointed to command it,* and a few battalions were ordered down from the north of Italy.

The Neapolitans, to the number of 70,000 or 80,000 men,† marched to the extreme edge of all their frontiers, which I caused to be feebly watched and guarded. Everything pointed to a speedy outbreak of hostilities.

The Commander-in-chief, Championnet, arrived

* General Championnet.

† Such was the calculation of the Neapolitan forces transmitted from divers sources, in particular from the French legation at Naples, since confirmed by prisoners, and made in their very capital itself, and yet a note attributed to General Mack only gives the active and effective army assembled on the frontier as 40,000 men. Perhaps, too, he wished to diminish his forces in order to excuse or attenuate his reverses; perhaps he does not include in this calculation detachments, depots, garrisons, etc. He numbers the French forces at 20,600 men, whereas, at the commencement of hostilities, I had not more than from 10,000 to 12,000 between Terracina and Fermo. We were by no means formidable, and I declare that no preparation was made, no order transmitted to me ever to instigate hostilities with the kingdom of Naples.—*Note by Marshal Macdonald.*

in Rome while matters were in this position, and with the assurance, given him by the Directory, that the Government of Naples would not dare to take upon themselves the renewal of the war. Both were mistaken, as was proved by the events of the next few days. I thought otherwise, and had arranged to be able to draw off my troops, evacuate Rome, and recross the Tiber. My forces at this point numbered about 6,000 men; the remainder, about the same number, were scattered towards Narni, Sulmona, and Fermo, at the entrance of the Abruzzi.

General Championnet had not been more than forty-eight hours in Rome, I think, when I received intelligence, at eleven o'clock at night, that the Neapolitans had crossed their frontiers without any preliminary declaration of war. I informed the Commander-in-chief, and at daybreak we mounted our horses and rode out towards Tivoli, the nearest outlet to Rome. All was quiet there, but I anticipated that the hostile body that intended to invade us at this point was waiting for news of the principal corps coming from San Germano to Velletri through Terracina. With a small detachment, I could easily have kept in check the enemy's troops at the end of the road which crosses the Pontine Marshes, but their principal body would come by the old road. My troops therefore, retired upon Rome. It was easy to foresee that the Neapolitans would debouch

simultaneously from many points on the frontier, and that is exactly what occurred.

The Commander-in-chief opened negotiations for the evacuation of the capital and retired, leaving me saddled with the burden of the retreat. I saw among the people signs of an approaching rising, of which, moreover, I had already received warning. I made serious representations to him, to which he seemed at first inclined to give attention. All my troops were drawn up outside the town; the first thing to be done was to conclude the victualling of Fort Sant'-Angelo. I had one or two detachments in the town, a hundred and fifty cavalry on the Piazza del Popolo, and cannon pointing down the three streets which opened on to this space.

I had just returned home to give some orders, when I heard shouting and hooting in the street. I hastened to the window, whence I saw my Commander galloping as fast as he could, making for the gate, and taking my cavalry with him. The effect of this departure—I soften the expression, and refrain from using one more energetic and more correct—was the signal for the rising that I had foreseen. All stray Frenchmen, whether military, civil, or attached to the Government, were pursued and massacred, and the shops pillaged.

All who could escape the popular fury took refuge in the churches, the large shops, and

the fortress of Sant'-Angelo, and some in my house. My aides-de-camp and staff officers were on horseback, trying to convey orders to the troops to re-enter the town, but they could not make a way through the crowd; those Generals who could not come into the city were in the same plight.

During this crisis, the danger of which increased with every minute, I summoned the artillery from the Piazza del Popolo. It was drawn up in front of my door, and several charges of grape-shot were fired; but the gunners, assailed from the windows, abandoned their posts. Every instant brought news of fresh outrages. Communication between one quarter of the city and another, nay, between one street and another, was cut off, when a band of insurgents was seen coming from the Piazza Navona, and marching upon my lodgings. I sent my small guard—twelve or fifteen men—to meet them. They fired several shots, which checked the boldest of them for a moment; but were finally compelled to give way. Seeing them return, I determined to mount my horse and make a way for myself. My guard received orders to re-enter and barricade my house. Sword in hand, we galloped through the Via del Popolo as far as the Piazza di Venezia, receiving some shots here and there, and a serious discharge from the street leading thence to the Palazzo Colonna. One of my suite was killed and one wounded.

Pursuing my road with the intention of rejoining my troops outside the town, I met near the Forum the head of the column commanded by General Maurice Mathieu, who, not being able to communicate with me, and having heard what was going on inside the walls, had at once started to effect an entrance. It was the 31st regiment of infantry, led by Colonel d'Arnaud—now a Lieutenant-General with a wooden leg—that had succeeded in making their way.

I returned to the Piazza di Venezia, where I distributed companies at the entrances of all the streets. They kept up a fire along the streets at the windows, and swept all before them. Orders were successfully conveyed, and at the end of two hours quiet was restored. No one was to be seen out of doors or at their windows, for they were fired upon as soon as they appeared. Fortunately the enemy was still twenty-four hours' march distant, otherwise it is impossible to say what misfortunes might not have resulted from this day.

I still think that, had the Commander-in-chief not gone off so inappropriately, or had he left during the night, as I implored him to do, we should have quelled the mob by our presence, for, as I have since learned, they believed that the town was entirely evacuated, and that the Neapolitan troops would re-enter it by the old road.

I took advantage of the quiet of night to complete my arrangements for both exterior and interior. A proclamation was printed and published, which remained without effect; for some hours before dawn groups began to form. I would not, however, give them time to concentrate themselves, and they were easily dispersed by a few charges of cavalry. Tranquillity was maintained, notwithstanding the presence of the enemy, who arrived within sight of our outposts.

I had refused to admit any *parlementaire*, as the town was to be evacuated that evening. Having settled everything, and while the last provisions were being carried to Sant'-Angelo, which was not included in the convention, while the bread was being baked and distributed as fast as it was ready, I went to the gate of St. John Lateran. On the way I met one of General Mack's aides-de-camp, who had been admitted by mistake, and who summoned me to yield up the city. I made him turn back.

On reaching the gate, the Neapolitan colonel, Moliterno, and a General of the same nation, whose name I have forgotten, reiterated the demand with considerable arrogance. I had a detachment of men masking a strong ambuscade, and a battery containing several guns loaded with grape-shot. The officer in command, who had heard the threats uttered by these gentlemen, whispered to me:

'Will you allow me to fire?'

'No,' I answered; 'no fighting to-day. To-morrow we may be able to make them regret their impertinence—perhaps even to-night.'

A partial engagement might have spoiled all my arrangements, roused the town afresh, stopped the distribution of food, and disorganized my ranks. I wished to recross the Tiber without trouble and in broad daylight.

On learning that the food was all distributed and the troops assembled, I gave the signal to retreat, and it was effected in the most orderly manner by the three streets that I have mentioned. Gradually the inhabitants emerged until they appeared in crowds, red cockades in their hats, going out to meet the Neapolitans, but without insulting us. My rear-guard came on slowly, followed by the advance-guard of the Neapolitans. While my columns were crossing the river, I went through the Via del Popolo, in the thick of the crowd, as far as the Piazza di Venezia, unaccompanied save by my aides-de-camp, without seeing any token of rebellion, without hearing any insolent word. The people had calmed down. The upper classes may have fomented the disturbances of the previous day, but they took no obvious part in them. Well-disposed people had remained at home, and had even saved many Frenchmen who, but for them, would probably have fallen victims to the insurrection.

When at last all my men had left the city, I sent orders to the Commandant of the fortress, which was not mentioned, and consequently not included in the convention relating to the evacuation of Rome, to withdraw all his men, to close his barriers, and to consider himself as besieged by a hostile army. I had entrusted our wounded in hospital to the generosity and humanity of General Mack, and left fifty men to guard them, begging him to replace and send them on to me. After taking all these precautions, I left Rome, assuring our friends and partisans that we should not be away more than a fortnight; and I undertook not to shave my beard during our absence. I kept my word, and wore it for seventeen days.

After leaving Rome in good order, and recrossing the Tiber, I marched all night. I encamped at Monterosi, whence two roads branch off, one to Viterbo, and one to Ancona. There I waited for fresh intelligence concerning the march of the Neapolitans; but after hearing a rumour of a successful engagement at Fermo, on the extreme eastern frontier of the States of Naples, I raised my camp, and chose another at Civita-Castellana, a strong and good position, naturally defended by several ravines and by a castle.

General Mack took my place at Monterosi, and came to attack me with over 40,000 men; I had

FACSIMILE OF

MARSHAL MACDONALD'S

HANDWRITING

Courcelles-le-roi 6 [illegible] 1803

Jamais le projet de quitter [illegible] mon cher voisin de vous donner le bon jour en passant, mais un événement dont je [illegible] encore, m'oblige de rester [illegible] un fait arrêté subitement dans mes [illegible] a marches auprès de mes [illegible] arrêté chez [illegible] une [illegible] Depuis, il a été saisi par un [illegible] atteint en moment un [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] cette circonstance m'a [illegible] beaucoup retardé et je n'ai pas [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] devant [illegible] Poitou et depuis [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] temps [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] sortir.

En songeant [illegible] mon cher [illegible] [illegible] (tous les [illegible]) je [illegible] [illegible] deux [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

Translation of the Foregoing Facsimile Letter.

COURCELLES-LE-ROI,
September 6, 1833.

It was my intention, my dear neighbour, when I quitted Paris to come and give you greeting as I passed, but an event, at the thought of which I still tremble, has been almost fatal to me. My son has been all but drowned at Montargis, where I stopped to breakfast with a friend. He was rescued by an Italian just as he was about to disappear. This circumstance delayed me considerably, and I was only able to make my bow as I passed St. Brisson, and since then the bad weather has prevented me from going out.

In sending to fetch [two words illegible], I beg for news of you, of your husband and children, of D'Argant, of his mother, and of Madame de Chabans, and I pray you to send me some.

Receive, my dear neighbour, my homage, respects, and attachment.

MACDONALD.

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HANDWRITING

at most 5,000 or 6,000 to oppose to him. I reinforced as well as I could my advance-guard at Nepi, and determined to go out to meet them. The shock was violent, but the Neapolitans did not make a stand, and retreated. We pursued them as far as their camp, which was still standing, and which they abandoned to us, continuing their flight to Rome. This was the principal point of attack. During the action three other columns advanced along the old road, on the right bank of the Tiber, passing by Santa Maria di Falori. I retraced my steps, repulsed all partial attacks, and thus dislodged this magnificent and haughty army, with less than 3,000 men engaged. Our gains were considerable: a large number of prisoners, artillery, arms, baggage, the camp, the military chest, etc.

Learning that General Mack had rallied his troops, and was passing along the right bank of the Tiber in order to help one of his columns that was descending upon Otricoli, I, too, recrossed the river at the bridge of Borghetto, and supported my right. It was not until after this change of position that I was informed by my scouts that this column was marching upon Otricoli, where I had established my depots of wounded and my provisions.

This road was my only means of communication with headquarters and with the rest of the army. I was not yet certain that the Neapolitans

had occupied Otricoli, and wished to discover their strength and their position. With this object I took a good detachment from my camp at Borghetto and started.

The fog was so dense that we could not see four yards ahead, but we could tell the presence of the enemy by a tolerably long line of fire, to which our men answered. From the enemy's hesitation I concluded that they were not in very good order. The thick fog was fortunate for both of us: it covered our movements and concealed our weakness, while it hid from us their direction. I made my cavalry charge them, on the chance, along the highroad. A discharge of artillery did not check my men; the enemy's advance-guard were surprised and put to the sword, and a battery of light artillery abandoned.

The fog lifted, and we continued our pursuit with a better light. I then discovered that I was dealing not with regulars, but with assassins, who had foully murdered my sick and wounded. The sight of some of these poor fellows, horribly mutilated, but not dead, increased our fury and thirst for vengeance. Learning that these banditti were making for Calvi, we followed them thither, and I at the same time sent orders to General Maurice Mathieu to start from camp immediately with his brigade, so as to cut off their flight to Rome. We surrounded Calvi, situated on a high escarped mountain; we were inferior in

numbers, but superior in pluck. The enemy offered to surrender. I answered in these words:

'Lay down your arms, or else run the gauntlet of my troops!'

They yielded to the number of about 7,000 men, commanded by Generals Moesk and ——.

After I had thus re-established my communications, I received orders from the Commander-in-chief to join him on the road to Rome; he was starting from Narni. General Mack was also on the way to support General Moesk in his retreat; the latter had written to him not to hurry, that he was in a very strong position at Calvi, and that after having rallied and rested his men he would join him. They apparently counted upon our inaction, and that ruined them. General Mack, warned by fugitives of what had happened, turned back towards Rome; we hastily followed him. I had left General Kellermann at Borghetto with a strong detachment. I sent him orders to march, and to drive before him, sword in hand, all that he found on the road.

These unexpected successes aroused the bitter jealousy of General Championnet, a very brave man, it must be acknowledged, but without much capacity. He had acquired a certain reputation while with the Sambre and Meuse Army, whence he came, by commanding a division that had taken part in several actions always with success.

* The second name is omitted in the Marshal's MS.

A party had obtained his nomination as Commander-in-chief. He himself was a man of pleasant temper, easy to live with; but he was surrounded by envious, pretentious, and ambitious men, one of whom in particular, Romieux, principal aide-de-camp, had the reputation of being the real wire-puller. There was another man, General Bonnami, chief of his staff, who had not borne a very good reputation on the Rhine, where his conduct in regard to money matters had not been quite straightforward. These charges were established later on in Naples, and this man had the impertinence to wish to direct and lead operations.

The orders I had received were insignificant, and eventually proved impossible of execution. I had been unfortunate enough to see this from the beginning, and made the mistake of answering:

'Let me know what the complete plan is, I will act accordingly, and do not trouble about the details.'

I spoke really in good faith, having a better knowledge of the localities, and also that confidence which always comes after a success gained over an enemy. The orders I received were timid to a degree, whereas they ought to have displayed courage and dash, which would have been quite justified by our successes, and by the spirit that animated my men as well as myself.

I only discovered these annoyances from the increasing coldness of our correspondence; mine was gay rather than serious, especially so in those reports in which I related our skirmishes, always brilliant and successful. I joked about them with no other intention than that of showing how little glory was to be obtained from fighting enemies who, a few days previously, had proved themselves both boastful and cowardly. Had they not massacred our sick and wounded at Otricoli, and threatened with a like fate those whom we had left in Rome, together with a detachment of fifty men to guard and preserve them against the fury of the populace? These men had been disarmed and made prisoners contrary to every law of war or of nations; and yet it was Mack, the General with a European reputation, who did these things, who wrote and published the fact! I think I said above that I had given him notice of our precautions, had appealed to his humanity on behalf of our sick, and begged him to send back our detachment after replacing it by another. I was indignant, furious, and in my turn published a general order and an energetic proclamation, which I hope will be considered justified when my correspondence is examined.*

When I joined the Commander-in-chief on the new road to Rome, he received me with consider-

* This correspondence is preserved among the historical archives of the French War Office.

able abruptness, instead of with congratulation upon our successes, which had already almost annihilated the Neapolitan army. I was much vexed, and an angry explanation ensued.

'You want to make me pass for a fool,' he said.

This speech was clearly produced by vanity.

'What foundation or proofs have you for your statement? How dare anyone suggest that I could display such a want of courtesy to my chief?'

'Here is your correspondence,' he replied.

It had been wickedly misconstrued, and presented to him as satirical instead of as the joke that I had intended it to be. I explained this to him, and he softened somewhat. General Éblé, commanding the artillery, came up at this moment; he was a friend of mine, and explained matters, and the General and I were outwardly reconciled. I then proposed a series of operations whereby we should immediately re-enter Rome (feeling persuaded that the Neapolitans there must be in confusion, which proved to be the case), and cut off the passage of a column which was being pursued by General Kellermann on the other side of the Tiber. Championnet consented.

CHAPTER VII.

At Fort Sant'-Angelo—Junction with Kellermann—Return to Rome—A Speedy Decision—Before Capua—A Truce—Arrest of Mack—Commander-in-chief of the Army of Naples—Arrival at Naples—Rising in Naples—Insurrections in the Country—Miracle of St. Januarius—Preparations.

I SENT forward messengers to inform the commandant of Sant'-Angelo of all that had happened in the sixteen days that had elapsed since we quitted Rome, and of our approach; we intended to return the following day. I told him to assist us by means of sorties, and to try to seize the King of Naples, who was there, and anyone else that he could lay hands upon; but, unfortunately, he was lulled to security, and asleep. The blockade had been removed, and he received intelligence of the misunderstandings in the town by means of our partisans. He was besides overjoyed at having held his own, and, until our arrival, it was absolutely hopeless to arouse him from his sense of safety, and thereby he missed making several important captures. To justify himself, he told me that he was afraid that a trap was being laid

for him, that he had suspected my spies of serving the enemy, although there was no mistaking the signs agreed upon between us, especially when my cannon was drawing near and becoming perfectly audible. But such is the pusillanimity of some men; everything frightens and terrifies them when they are not actually kept in leading-strings!

The Commander-in-chief, hearing that Rome was evacuated, had preceded me; I was to join him at Ponte Molle. He informed me that a column of the enemy, which had come up too late to cross the town and follow General Mack, who had retired to Albano, had stopped at sight of some of our scouts, and that Bonnami, his chief of the staff, having parleyed with them, had granted them three hours to decide whether to lay down their arms.

'An excellent plan,' I replied; 'nothing could be better devised for the purpose of enabling them to escape by the Présides* !'

Our junction with General Kellermann had been meanwhile effected. He, as I have already said, followed, without overtaking, the troop since his departure from Borghetto for Civita-Castellana, because he had taken the old road to Rome, while the others marched in a parallel line with him by Monterosi, Bucano, La Storta, and

* The Neapolitan *enclaves* in Tuscany, part of the Stato degli Presidii, which were safely reached by this column under Comte Roger de Damas.

had taken up a position masked by considerable heights.

General Bonnami came to us and said with emphasis:

'We have got this troop; within an hour they will have laid down their arms.'

'No doubt,' I replied, 'if they are still there. But do you suppose that a troop with free communication behind it, and commanded by an *émigré*,* Comte Roger de Damas, will have the kindness to come and yield to us?'

'Why not?' he retorted. 'I told them they should have no quarter if they did not. And their vedettes are still there.'

'What proof is that? Of course they are there to conceal the movements; they will remain there as long as they are left; besides, to carry out your threat, they should be surrounded, and their rear is quite open!'

The Commander-in-chief had listened in silence to this conversation, but at last, stung by my remarks, he said:

'Well, let us go and see what has really happened.'

We went, and found exactly what was to be expected, not a creature! Then we had to

* Name given to the Frenchmen who left their country in 1789. Many of them came to England, and supported themselves by giving music and dancing lessons, etc. They could not return to France until after the Restoration.—*Translator's note.*

follow; but the small number of our troops in front were resting, or dispersed, believing that an armistice had been concluded, and mine had halted behind, so that it took us some time to collect a small force of cavalry. At about the distance of a league they came upon a very well-posted rear guard; a brush took place, but with no result, and, as night was coming on, we recalled the detachment.

I asked for orders, and was told to guard the Ponte Molle and the town; I remarked that the important point was the road to Naples, but was told that it would be attended to. Nevertheless, I sent a regiment to the Lateran Gate, another in reserve to the Coliseum, and the Piazza di Venezia. Thus echeloned, I went to see the Torlonias* and get some news, as the commandant of Sant'-Angelo knew nothing, and I re-entered my former dwelling, which I had quitted seventeen days previously. I had kept my promise within two days.

About eleven o'clock the same night, I received news from the Lateran Gate and from General Championnet that a body of the enemy was advancing on that side; the General himself, in great anxiety, rode up with his staff.

'Make yourself easy,' I said; 'I have seen to everything; my reserves are now marching towards that point. I know the way; let us go.'

* Well-known Roman bankers.—*Translator's note.*

But it was unnecessary. On reaching the gate we found that the regiment I had placed there, the 11th, if I recollect rightly, had sufficed to repulse the assailants to the number of 5,000 or 6,000 men, as I learned from some prisoners, led by General Mack in person. This was nearly all that remained to him of the formidable army which had so boastfully declared that in a very short time it would drive us out of Italy. General Mack did not think that we were again occupying Rome, or else he hoped to surprise us, and enable Comte Roger de Damas to get through. This expedition having failed, the General, no longer hoping to effect a junction, gained the road to Capua, and we returned to Rome.

I was just about to get into bed, when a *parlementaire* was brought to me, asking leave for another column to pass through the town on its way from Viterbo to Ponte Molle.

'Are you in earnest in making such a request?' I asked.

'Certainly; they tell me a truce has been proclaimed.'

'You have been misinformed; lay down your arms, that is the best thing you can do.'

'What! lay down our arms? We will defend ourselves. We are in force.'

'Very good,' I said; then, turning to the officer who had introduced this man, I continued: 'Take him back, and give orders from me to the com-

mandant of Ponte Molle to put all these gentlemen to the sword; I am going to bed.'

'Is that your final decision?' asked the messenger.

'Yes, it is.'

'In that case I will surrender.'

I discovered that he was the chief of the band of from 1,200 to 1,500 men, which had been skirmishing about my right flank while we were at Civita Castellana, and had given us a considerable amount of trouble. Next morning I sent a report of what had occurred to the Commander-in-chief, adding that I had not cared to disturb his slumbers for so small a matter.

A general order emanating from headquarters announced all these happy results; to our great surprise, my division was hardly mentioned, although the army did us justice and gave us the honours of this short campaign; but what will scarcely obtain belief is that the staff received all the promotions and rewards. This injustice and partiality made me as angry as the rest of the army. I went straight to the General, and a second and very sharp altercation followed, but without producing any favourable result for my division, and, as if to punish it for the advantages it had secured, it was ordered to march at the rear of the column. We had to swallow this insult; but a few days later, as we met some rear-guards, they sent us forward to the front again.

We thus arrived at the intrenched camp at Capua, where we received overtures for a suspension of hostilities which tempted the Commander-in-chief. I, however, opposed them strongly at the meeting that was called of all the Generals of Division. Nothing was settled that day, but on the following a delay of forty-eight hours was granted in my absence. I was furious; but I had to submit, and made all my preparations for a desperate attack at the expiration of the delay allowed.

The excuse given for this ill-timed concession was the absence of news of Generals Duhesme and Lemoine, who were marching upon Naples by the Abruzzi; but the excuse was a bad one. The terror of the Neapolitans was increasing, disturbance was rife in the country, fear in the capital, the court was fleeing to Sicily; therefore there should have been no cessation of hostilities. This state of things might have been taken for granted even had it not been officially known to exist, and there was every reason, nay, necessity, for advancing to assist our troops in crossing the Abruzzi by the prompt and decisive occupation of the capital, instead of allowing time for a reorganization of the remains of the army, for the defence of Capua and its intrenched camp, and insurrection and rebellion among the inhabitants.

At the conclusion of this ill-advised armistice

I ordered a reconnaissance; General Maurice Mathieu commanded it, and I followed to support him. All the Neapolitan outposts gave way, and vanished as fast as their horses could carry them. They gave the alarm in the camp and town, whence the defenders began to retire, when General Mack conceived the idea of sending a messenger with an offer of capitulation. In accordance with an old custom, the advance-guard stopped the officer and conducted him to General Mathieu, who sent him on to me. I, unfortunately, was at some distance supporting a detachment of our troops, who had met with some resistance in trying to cross the Volturno. I was furious, and ordered the attack to be continued. I desired, and should have been able, had it not been for this circumstance, to force the intrenched camp, cross the Volturno by the bridge, and seize Capua; but the Neapolitans had had time to consider their position, and to put themselves behind their intrenchments and ramparts. I was in advance of the reinforcements that I was bringing up, and arrived just in time to see General Mathieu's arm broken by a discharge of grape-shot; at the same moment I received an order from the Commander-in-chief to cease firing, and return to my position, just as I had hopes of being able to carry the enemy's camp.

I heard next day that Capua was to be handed over by capitulation, and that an armistice for an

indefinite period had been signed, instead of our rapidly occupying the capital. I was bitterly disappointed at being thus balked of a conquest not only easy in itself, and which would have crowned our efforts, but which must have produced a striking moral effect in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, in Europe, but especially in Italy and Austria. A fresh altercation took place at Capua; as hostilities were at an end, I asked to be relieved of my command, a request that was granted with pleasure and alacrity, and I wrote to the War Minister and to the Directory, asking to be employed elsewhere. While awaiting an answer, I stayed at Capua.

Shortly afterwards the truce was violated, I forget on what pretext. The lazzaroni* organized themselves for the defence of Naples, the troops were disarmed, General Mack resigned and asked for a passport into Austria, which the Commander-in-chief granted. The French Government, however, on being informed of this refused its consent, caused Mack to be arrested at Ancona, contrary to the law of nations, and taken as a prisoner of war to Paris. On passing through Capua the General paid me a visit; it was five o'clock in the morning, and I was in bed. I was soon up, however, and said to him:

'Well, General, a fortnight ago you would not have caught me napping.'

* Neapolitan beggars.—*Translator's note.*

'Ah!' he replied; 'you did for me altogether at Calvi.'

In the course of conversation upon past events, he told me that an attempt had been made to poison him at Capua, and to assassinate him at Naples; he was then very far from well, and I saw him again the following year, in Paris, in the same state.

'How,' I asked at our first interview, 'could a general so distinguished by his talents expose his military reputation as a great tactician by putting himself at the head of such an army?'

'I was urged, entreated by the King of Naples,' he replied; 'I resisted, but my Sovereign commanded me. I was compelled to submit; and on seeing the army, well drilled, well organized, well equipped, displaying such devotion, and, above all, such determination to make war upon you and to liberate Rome and Italy, I was seduced.'

'Perhaps also,' I added, laughing, 'the prospect of coming into France and to Paris had something to do with it.'

'All that army wanted,' he replied, 'was to have been led by a French general.'

After that compliment he took leave of me and departed. I recommended him to the special care of all our commandants. He passed near Gaëta first, as that fortress was yielding to our troops, and to General Rey, who was in command,

although it had only been threatened with shells.

After the violation of the truce, as I have said, the army marched upon Naples; the lazzaroni made some resistance, but the city was eventually occupied. Being so near, I could not help visiting it. I spent a week there, and learned what abominable exactions were being levied. I deplored them, and left for Rome, where I awaited my next instructions.

One day, on returning tired from a ride in the neighbourhood, I had allowed myself a siesta, when I was aroused by the arrival of a courier. I looked at the despatch, and, to my great surprise, read my nomination as Commander-in-chief of the Army of Naples in place of General Championnet.* The Directory, dissatisfied with the want of stability in the conduct of the campaign, with the armistice at Capua, and with the extortions that had been committed, had decided to recall and make him give an account of his conduct. I am bound to say that this proceeding was too severe, that the greater part of the army was innocent of these iniquities, that they were regretted by everybody; but none had any confidence in the leader whose weakness was universally deplored, so that with truth, and without either vanity or conceit, I may say that great

* The decree conferring this appointment bears the date of 25 Pluviose, year vii. (February 13, 1799).

pleasure was manifested in my appointment, especially by those troops that had served under me while I had had the command in the Roman States and during the campaign.

I started and passed General Championnet at Aversa. We neither stopped nor spoke. I knew that a magnificent reception was being prepared for me at Naples; out of modesty I avoided it by arriving at eleven o'clock at night, whereas I was only expected the next morning.

Everything was disorganized. Communications between the divisions were interrupted, and those that occupied Salerno and the places nearest at hand were cut off even from the capital. I re-arranged all the communications, reassembled a few scattered troops, and restored order in the town. In order to re-establish confidence and tranquillity, I issued proclamations, backed up by effectual demonstrations. I organized a new government in concert with Abrial, the Commissioner sent by the Directory, a very good and worthy man, now count and peer of France.

I next turned my attention to military matters. Our successes against the insurgents were universal, but no sooner was the insurrection crushed at one point than it broke out at another. Communication with Rome had been frequently interrupted. Large escorts, and even cannon, were necessary generally to ensure a safe journey from

Mola di Gaëta and Fondi to Terracina; but sometimes impatient travellers would start alone or with slender escorts, and then fell victims to the banditti and brigands, who inflicted upon them the most abominable cruelties.

I passed several months amid these agitations, not only in the kingdom of Naples, but also in the Roman States and in Tuscany, whither my command extended; but I succeeded in maintaining perfect order in the capitals, especially in Naples, by means of a national guard that I formed, and of the leader of the lazzaroni, whom I gained over by presents, and by conferring on him the rank and distinctive marks of a colonel. I also formed the remains of the Neapolitan army into detachments of troops, in order to employ those among their officers who displayed the greatest zeal for the new order of things—that is, for the Parthenopeian republic;* but these troops soon betrayed us, giving up the tower of Castellamare to the English, after massacring some of their own officers.

I had resolved to induce Admiral Caracciolo to take service in the new fleet; he equipped a flotilla which secured respect for the port and coasts of Naples, frequently threatened by the fruitless attempts of the English, who occupied the islands and were stationed in the roads. I

* Parthenopeia, ancient name of Naples.—*Translator's note.*

had a somewhat acrimonious correspondence with one of their captains, Commander Throwbridge (*sic*).*

Castellamare was a very important point, and so near Naples that its loss was likely to raise the flagging spirits of the insurgents. They were prepared to band together, and this treachery was the signal; but I lost not an instant, and marched in person upon Castellamare. As I crossed Naples I noticed many people who had already placed the red cockade in their hats. It became necessary now to strike a decisive blow, so as to prevent this rising from gaining ground in Naples, where my garrison was but small, (except in the forts, which were well occupied, especially that of Sant'-Elmo, that existed as a standing menace to the town; the fear that this fort might set fire to Naples had acted as a salutary check upon the inhabitants). The insurgents from Calabria and Salerno had advanced to the tower of the Annunziata, and were posted near a brook; I attacked them; to rout and put them to flight was the work of an instant.

While they were being pursued and sabred in all directions, those who held Castellamare took fright; some, after a few discharges of cannon, seeing the English put to sea, rushed into the water to save themselves; the rest yielded; the principals in the rising were shot. The flags of

* Afterwards Admiral Sir Thomas Trowbridge.

England and Naples still remained flying side by side: I promised a reward of twenty-five louis (£20) to whomsoever should bring them to me; half an hour later they were in my hands, though they were not obtained without some loss.

Once more in possession of the tower, I turned the guns upon the vessels and those who had taken to flight. I must say here that the skilful and brave Admiral Caracciolo contributed largely with his flotilla to the success of the expedition. He afterwards fell a victim to the English admiral Nelson, who cruelly and ignominiously caused him to be hanged from the yard-arm of his own ship, a death with which I have always deeply reproached myself, as it was I who overcame his reluctance, and attached him to our side.

After re-establishing order, giving all the commands necessary to put an end to the rising, and pursuing those in flight to beyond Salerno, I re-entered Naples, preceded by the banners and flags of the insurgents, which were burned next day on the Piazza Reale by the public executioner. The red cockades had disappeared, and the heat occasioned by this incident had quite cooled down in the capital. Still more important events were, however, looming in the distance. Russia was marching an army into Italy to join the Austrians, our troops were assembling on the Adige under General Schérer, and hostilities soon began.

While these events were in preparation I was

not inactive; I concentrated my troops. A fresh insurrection broke out in the provinces; another assemblage was dispersed at Cannæ at the mouths of the Ofanto. I attempted to carry out orders by revictualling Malta and the Ionian Islands; convoys started, but not one reached its destination; they were either taken or surrendered.

I begged the French Government to evacuate Naples and Rome, keeping only the fortresses. 'If our troops are victorious on the Adige,' I said, 'they will require to make good their losses; if they are beaten, they will need reinforcements and support. There are no troops nearer to them than mine, and these, in the latter case, will be cut off from all communication. In the former case, supported by the fortresses, I could return and reoccupy the two States.' But the principle of keeping everything, and of not yielding a foot of ground, even to imminent danger, gained the day, and my suggestions were passed over.

Nevertheless, seeing that this might come to pass, I continued my preparations, pretexting the necessity of concentration, in order to parry any attack that might be made on the shores of the Mediterranean, the Adriatic, or the interior. I pointed out a place which I had not the remotest intention of occupying, feeling persuaded that I should receive serious remonstrances from various private interests affected; nor was I disappointed.

I pretended to give way, and succeeded in having pointed out to me the very place whither I wished to go—namely, the neighbourhood of Caserta, on the left bank of the Volturno. No doubt it would have been better from a military point of view to take the right bank, but to do that I should have had to disclose my plan; moreover, I had no army in front of me, and should always have time to cross the river.

I provisioned the forts at Naples, Capua, Gaëta, Sant'-Angelo at Rome, Civita-Vecchia, Civita-Castellana, and Ancona. Rome was in want of food; famine was beginning to make itself felt there. I sent them provisions. The national guard and the lazzaroni at Naples were increased; I reviewed them, they took over the duty, and I withdrew my men. I called in the divisions scattered in the provinces, and concentrated all before Caserta, where I established my headquarters. Finally, I caused the miracle of St. Januarius* to be worked for our benefit, being myself present on the occasion; I will give a description of it later on, as I think that no one has ever been in so good a position to observe it as Commissioner Abrial and myself. I had taken careful measures in consequence of the great concourse of people, and tranquillity was not

* The saint whose blood is preserved, and is said to liquefy on special occasions. He was martyred at Naples by the Emperor Diocletian, A.D. 284.—*Translator's note.*

disturbed. The camp of Caserta was moved, and brought to surround Naples during the ceremony, and the troops did not return till the evening.

This display of force and other similar demonstrations maintained order in the capital and neighbourhood. The victualling of the forts and fortresses went on quickly; as did also that of Rome; but it was more difficult to keep open communications, especially with the Adriatic provinces; strong escorts were necessary, and flying columns showed themselves everywhere.

While these arrangements and preparations, which excited no suspicion, were going on, I caused all useless matter—all that could embarrass or encumber the march of an army—to be sent to Rome, and thence into Tuscany; strict orders were given and published for the purpose. The Commander-in-chief of the army in Italy had asked for a considerable number of ammunition waggons; they were despatched to him, drawn by horses hastily requisitioned. General Éblé, whose skill is so well known, organized a pontoon-bridge at Capua in order to facilitate the crossing of the rivers Volturno, Garigliano, and Tiber, which would help us in our march, and enable us to effect a junction with the Army of Italy, supposing it were beaten; or, if it stood in need of reinforcement, would enable us to cross the rivers; or, on the other hand, would be of service to us both alike, supposing we were obliged to retreat.

CHAPTER VIII.

Bad News—Advance to Rome—Alarm for Naples—Departure from Rome—Sarzana and Pontremoli—Rising in Tuscany—Surrender of Fort Sant'-Elmo—A Brave Action—Capitulation of Ferrara—Generals Montrichard and Schérer—Offer of Resignation.

WHILE in the thick of these preparations, I heard at one and the same time of the declaration of war, of the loss of a battle,* of the retreat of the Army of Italy, and received orders to advance immediately, leaving garrisons in such forts and fortresses as I proposed to retain in the two States, and especially taking steps to keep possession of Rome. My foresight had been of the utmost service. I only needed to recall the divisions concentrated in the provinces of Lecce and Bari and the flying columns. I hastily summoned the members of the Neapolitan Government, who were terror-stricken on hearing of what had happened on the Adige and of my marching orders. I begged them to remain at their posts under the protection of the forts and

* Battle of Magnano, lost by Schérer, who was replaced by Moreau.

of the national guard. Not one of them, not one even of my own men, had divined the secret of my preparations. I am not now sure if I even confided them to Abrial, the Government commissioner.

The troops returned by forced marches to camp. Scarcely had those who held Brindisi left it, when the French man-of-war, the *Généreux*, which had escaped from the fatal battle of Aboukir Bay (1798), came to cast anchor there, feeling convinced that it was yet in our hands. She tried to force an entrance, and was fired upon by such guns as had not been rendered useless. The firing was heard by our retiring troops; they turned back immediately and saved the ship, which set sail again at once, and the troops reached their destination, followed, however, by large crowds of insurgents, who compelled them to face about several times. The latter collected at Avellino, but their proximity was so dangerous for Naples, and kept the camp so constantly on the alert, that I determined to attack them. I did so. They made no resistance, and were speedily put to flight. This is the site of the ancient Caudine Forks, where a Roman host laid down their arms and passed under the yoke.

Meanwhile we were hurrying on the victualling of the castles of Naples, and the fortresses of Capua and Gaëta, of the fort Sant'-Angelo at Rome, of Civita-Castellana, and of Civita-Vecchia

and Ancona. A certain amount of baggage and artillery, and a pontoon train and other encumbrances, were forwarded to Rome. I received dismal intelligence of the results of the battle of the Adige, and of the retreat of the Army of Italy, of risings in the Cisalpine Republic, in Tuscany, in the Roman States, and in the Abruzzi provinces. Every despatch, while informing me of these occurrences, exhorted me to hasten my movements. I was, of course, most anxious to do this, but I could not make greater speed. I had already sent forward some troops into Tuscany, echeloning them from Rome to Florence. A number of empty ammunition-waggons under convoy had started through the Marches* for Italy ; they were compelled to retire upon Rome. Many of my orders were rendered nugatory, or were misunderstood by other Generals, especially by the one in command in the Roman States. No one considered or thought of anything but his own immediate business, without any regard for unity of plan.

Instructions had been issued to the commandants of all the strongholds and castles, which prescribed for them carefully their conduct in every extremity. I told them that they could only be invested, and not attacked, as there were no regular troops to fear, and the Neapolitan artillery

* Name formerly given to the Papal States between Romagna and Naples.—*Translator's note.*

had been assembled at Capua. I further told them to collect all the provisions they could about them, and, as far as lay in their power, to be careful how they were used. I added that I would soon come to their relief, imagining that France was about to make great efforts to help the Army of Italy, and that by means of our junction we ought to be soon able to regain our advantages and repulse the enemy.

With this object, in the event of our being victorious, or of my being prevented passing into Tuscany, I had taken endless pains and trouble to form a pontoon train, wherewith I could cross the Garigliano and Volturno, after defending the ground inch by inch. My one fear was that I might be unable to effect my junction with the Army of Italy. This army had been repulsed in Piedmont, and the risings, fomented by the enemy, were increasing. General Gauthier, commanding in Tuscany, had but few troops, and the detachments that I had been able to send up were but very feeble reinforcements. My instructions to him were to fall back upon me in case he found it necessary to evacuate the territory.

Having thus provided for the garrisons charged with the double task of ensuring the safety of our numerous sick and wounded, and of providing me with places of retreat in case I were beaten back, I crossed the Volturno, and marched in two columns on Rome, having with me only twenty-

four battalions and squadrons. The right column met with severe resistance at Lisola, but succeeded in forcing its way; the left rounded the Pontine Marshes, which I myself crossed, and we reached Rome, whence troops were continually starting for Florence. There I learned that the Army of Italy hoped to make a stand upon the Ticino, which encouraged me; I learned at the same time that a strong detachment which was evacuating the Abruzzi by way of Sulmona had had much difficulty in forcing its way past Rocca d'Anzo. I think it had lost three hundred men, together with artillery, baggage and provisions; the bridges had been destroyed, and the roads encumbered with obstacles of all kinds that had only been surmounted with difficulty.

I was in a state of terrible anxiety and worry, owing to the position in which I had left so many French people in the State of Naples, so many persons devoted to our cause, and who would be exposed to the vengeance of the Court, now sheltered in Sicily, if our efforts were to fail. At Rome the difficulties in the way of organization occupied me several days, though they did not retard the march of my troops. The risings in Naples had extended over the entire Roman States, as over Tuscany, and, in fact, the whole of Italy was disaffected. Despite my letters and apparent confidence, I had good reason to fear that we should be stopped on the road by the obstacles

caused by this state of things; for the communications, already interrupted on the right bank of the river Po, were closed also between Florence and Genoa. I at length quitted Rome, after encouraging the French authorities, as well as those of the Republic, to show a bold face in these times of difficulty. I left a garrison, a small one I admit, together with a few Roman troops, upon whom I did not count, especially if they once met with a reverse. I left there the pontoon train, baggage, and various things which only encumbered my march. A party had preceded us without an escort, among whom were the family of Méchin. They had all been seized on the road by the insurgents.

General Monnier, who commanded the district of Ancona, the only man who did his duty, had sent to me for instructions. I merely answered:

'You know what honour requires and what the law demands; I leave it to you.'

On the supposition that all my efforts were going to fail, and that I was going to be completely stopped on my march, I intended to occupy a strong position, and to keep the enemy in check as long as I could, for I felt sure that they would never dare to venture into the Roman and Neapolitan Republics as long as the Army of Italy was not obliged to recross the Alps. In the contrary event, I determined to dispute every foot of ground, falling back gradually upon

Rome and the Neapolitan forts, to defend myself to the last gasp, convinced that France would spare no efforts to reinforce the Army of Italy, and attempt fresh battles in order to set us free.

General Moreau, on his side, tried to check the enemy, but mere pluck could do nothing against forces very superior in number and flushed with victory. His communications being hampered, he ought, in my opinion, to have managed to stretch out a hand towards me while falling back upon Genoa. The junction could alone have enabled us, if not to resume the offensive, at any rate to await assistance from France ; but he seemed to prefer to maintain his communications through Piedmont, which was already rising, instead of by the Cornice. This last plan could have served the double purpose of covering that road and of preventing any obstacles being placed in the way of our junction in Tuscany. Instead of executing a manœuvre at once so simple, so natural, and so useful to our cause, finding himself compelled to retire and to abandon the Ticino, he threw himself into Piedmont in order, as it was said, to attract thither the Austro-Russians, and to return by a forced march from Ceva to Genoa, I believe. The latter place capitulated to a band of insurgents, so that, deprived of this outlet, he was obliged to abandon part of his equipment, and to make his way over the mountains.

I had left Rome in the hope that the Ticino would be held long enough to allow me to effect my junction, and on reaching Florence, or on my way thither, learned the condition into which the Army of Italy had been thrown. My plan had been bold, hazardous perhaps; but it was of the kind that often succeeds in war. I had never shown all my hand. Communication between Florence and Genoa had been cut off, and it was not safe to trust to the sea; no ship was ready at the port of Lerici, in the Gulf of Spezzia. I knew also that Mantua was, in all probability, invested; it was a very strong position, well garrisoned, I had reason to believe, well provisioned, and commanded by General Latour-Foissac, father of the present Major-General of that name.

I made for Pistoia, and my first proceeding was to take up a position on the Apennines and guard all the passes. I made an attack on the enemy at Sarzana and Pontremoli. Both places were carried, and communication with Genoa re-established. General Dessole, chief of the staff of the Army of Italy, separated, I forget how, from General Moreau, gave me all the sad details just related. Montrichard and Victor had posted their divisions, one at Bologna, and the other not far from Genoa. I had matured my undeveloped scheme, which was to bring about a junction between the two, if they were placed under my orders, and to precipitate myself from the summit of the Apennines

against the enemy's left wing, which was posted in the valley of the Po at the foot of the passes, and the principal body of which was covering Modena.

I communicated this plan to General Dessole, and he approved it, at the same time, however, advising me to suspend its execution until the arrival of General Moreau at Genoa, an event which was shortly to take place. The operation, if successfully carried out, would paralyze the left wing of the enemy, if it did not utterly destroy it, and would separate it from the main army by cutting off its communications with it, and driving it across the Po. Proceeding up the right bank of the river, threatening to proceed to raise the siege of Mantua, I hoped by that means to disengage the Army of Italy by forcing the enemy to retreat along the left bank, after which I should have effected my junction with Moreau at Parma or Piacenza.

Meanwhile, I had made preparations to suppress a rising in Arezzo, but postponed it, as I required all my forces.

It might perhaps have been better to effect the junction by the Cornice; at any rate, it would then have been managed without obstacles, as it eventually turned out; but I think I have already explained that there were not sufficient ships in the harbour of Lerici to transport all the artillery and baggage to Genoa, and the Cornice was nothing but a mule-track. However, in proceeding

to carry out the other plan, we did not neglect to supply plenty of transports in case of defeat, which, later on, saved all our most precious war-material.

If, on the other hand, the expedition succeeded it would bring about results of even greater importance. The gain of a single battle would enable us to reconquer all we had lost, and would put a stop to the insurrections, which would no longer have the countenance and support of the enemy; but to prevent failure, the simultaneous concurrence of both armies was necessary, albeit at a great distance apart. The sequel will show how it failed owing to Moreau's irresolution.

All our reports tended to prove a determination on the part of the enemy to keep their position before Modena, and to prevent the Army of Italy from quitting the passes of the Apennines. Montrichard's division, stationed as I have said at Bologna, as well as Victor's, at Pontremoli, I think, were placed under my command. General Lapoype, with 3,000 or 4,000 men, was at Bobbio. The important matter was to retain Florence and Leghorn in my absence, and the State of Tuscany, being almost in arms, necessitated the presence of a force sufficiently imposing to maintain order and give us security. General Gauthier took the command.*

* I think I have made a mistake in quoting the Ticino for the Bormida. It was behind the latter river that Moreau had

General Moreau, unaware of these exigencies, and imagining that I was marching with all my troops, expected that I should collect about 40,000 men, including those belonging to his army, from Tuscany and Genoa, that is to say, with Montrichard's, Pérignon's, and Victor's divisions; but of the Army of Naples I left in that kingdom and in the Roman States from 14,000 to 15,000 men, including sick, and 4,000 or 5,000 in Tuscany. General Pérignon's division could not act with me, for it was only later, on reaching Piacenza, that I heard that the small body belonging to General Lapoype at Bobbio would be at my disposal. The Army of Naples was now able to take the offensive, as with Montrichard's and Victor's divisions, it reached the total of 25,000 men, well equipped.

After so long a forced march as that from Brindisi into Tuscany, the need of a few days'

retired, and whence he was driven during my march from Rome to Florence. It will not seem strange to you, my son, if, writing as I do from memory, after so many years crowded with events, you find here and there little slips that you can easily correct by examining my journals and correspondence, which I have not by me, and which, even if I had them, are in such confusion that they would be no real help to me. Moreover, I am writing for you alone, to give you a sketch of my military career. I shall presently be compelled to have recourse to some of my old journals, because a great event which took place soon afterwards, the Battle of the Trebbia, has given rise to much controversy, and will require more detail. —*Note by Marshal Macdonald.*

rest, and for repairs to material, clothing, harness, ironwork, etc., etc., will be easily understood. The army therefore took up a position. I had only very doubtful information regarding the strength and position of the enemy, and it would have been imprudent to risk anything.

We expected, and hoped, that the Mediterranean squadron, commanded by Admiral Bruix, was on its way with a reinforcement of 15,000 men; if this were the case, and they could be disembarked either at Spezzia or Genoa, and there joined to all the men whom Moreau could collect round the town, we might hope for some success, and look forward to repairing our losses; but these rumours were unfounded.

I learned at the same time news that had better foundation in fact, namely, the appearance off Ancona of a Turco-Russian fleet, conveying troops to be disembarked; but I was quite at ease, knowing the promptitude of General Monnier. Besides, the Italian business would have to be settled before the reduction of that town, which would take several months. I thought that I might place the same reliance upon the commandants left in the kingdom of Naples, but shortly after my departure they allowed themselves to be intimidated by masses of insurgents, supported by some English detachments, and yielded one after another. What was not the least unfortunate part of the matter was that they

abandoned Fort Sant'-Elmo, giving up their compatriots to the vengeance of their sovereign, and Admiral Nelson did not hesitate to tarnish his glory and reputation by causing the unfortunate Admiral Caracciolo to be hanged at his own masthead. Other patriots were courageous enough to blow themselves up in the little fort called, I think, the Maddalena, near Naples, on the road to Castellamare. I have never heard that after the French reoccupied this kingdom, which became that of Joseph Bonaparte and Murat, any steps were taken to honour this act of devotion.

While the troops were taking up the positions assigned to them, the work of making and distributing necessary articles was pushed on as fast as possible; provisions were collected, either to cross the Apennines or to fall back upon Genoa. I discussed with General Dessole the advantages and drawbacks of an offensive movement; if Moreau returned to Genoa with the rest of his troops, and we acted in concert, we might count upon a force of about 60,000 men. In any case, I urged upon General Dessole the advisability of sending all ships at his disposal from Genoa to Spezzia, and I sent thither all mine from Leghorn. The event proved that this was a wise precaution.

I had just heard that the citadel of Ferrara had capitulated, and that Fort Urbino was about to be attacked. General Montrichard was at Bologna.

I did not know him personally, but presumed he was a man of talent and courage, as he had appeared to possess a reputation upon the banks of the Rhine, a reputation no doubt usurped, as I learned to my cost. I had praised him, never dreaming that he had been the principal cause of the loss of the Commander-in-chief, Schérer, on the Adige, that he had retired from Legnago almost without striking a blow, thus leaving the passage open to the enemy. This had compelled the unlucky Schérer to retreat, and his original acceptance of the command had been severely commented upon without justice. He was reproached with severity, even with harshness, I know not on what ground. I have never found cause in him for anything but praise, and certainly his misfortunes did not arise from want of skill. During his ministry he had quarrelled with General Bonaparte, and consequently with the Army of Italy. When the latter started for Egypt with its chief, and was replaced by other troops from the Rhine and the interior, the hostile feeling remained, and took root in the Italian soil.

My troops continued their march to take up their position at the mouth of all the passes of the Apennines, and I established my headquarters at Lucca, after deciding with the commandant and the Government Commissioner at Florence upon the best means for keeping open communications in Tuscany. This had become a difficult

matter, owing to the partial insurrections, particularly that at Arezzo.

I think I have already said that Pontremoli had been retaken. I caused Sarzana to be occupied, so as to help and support communications with Genoa. I received good news from Naples, but none from any of the fortresses. The squadron under Admiral Bruix, which I believed to be holding the Mediterranean, was at Toulon without any troops. Porto-Ferraio, in the island of Elba, was besieged and clamouring for help, but I had none to give. I begged the General commanding in Corsica to see to it. Want made itself universally felt, even at Genoa. I visited Leghorn. Victor's division came to Sarzana to replace the troops from Naples. I had not been warned of this movement, which necessitated a change of position. The civil agents with the two armies* could not agree. Worn out with these quarrels as much as with my work, and considering it hopeless to bring all parts of the service into perfect agreement—it even seemed impossible to keep a friendly feeling between the Generals of the two armies owing to their jealousy—I explained the situation to the Directory, proposing to it to unite the two under one Commander,

* The divisions of Montrichard and Victor, put provisionally at the disposal of Macdonald, had not ceased to belong to Moreau's army. They kept alive a spirit of dangerous rivalry with the Army of Naples.

that of the Army of Italy, at the same time offering to resign and serve in the line. I thus sacrificed myself to the public good, but it was long ere my offer of patriotic devotion reached its destination, and I obtained an answer. Meanwhile, events were becoming more acute; something had to be done to stop the advance of the enemy and these constant risings.

CHAPTER IX.

Battle of Modena—The Marshal in Danger—Severely Wounded —Montrichard's Mistake—Austrian Breach of Faith—March towards the Trebbia and Tidone—Battle of the Trebbia.

I HAD arranged a plan with Moreau whereby our armies should join at Parma or Piacenza; he was to follow in person Victor's division, which would debouch near Fortenuovo.

My entire army advanced towards Modena, each column having orders to be in position by the 22 or 23 Prairial (10 and 11 June, 1799). Montrichard's and Rusca's divisions, escorting the artillery, were to follow the high road to Bologna. I followed Ollivier's division by Pistoia and Formigine. Orders had been previously given for a simultaneous attack upon the enemy stationed at Modena, with a view to cutting off their retreat. This attack was to take place on the 24th. On the previous evening they attacked our advanced posts at Formigine, and were beaten back.

The troops were full of ardour, and on the morning of the 24th, at a meeting of all the Generals, an action was decided upon. I had no

news of Montrichard's and Rusca's divisions. It was difficult to communicate with them. Their cannon ought to have foretold their approach; I heard it in the direction of Fort Urbino. Then I ordered a charge; a furious combat began; my left wing even gave way a little; I sent to support it, and then ordered a simultaneous charge of cavalry and infantry. The enemy were routed and dispersed; several regiments laid down their arms. We entered Modena pell-mell with them, encumbered with baggage.

The results of this affair nearly cost me my life. My troops, unable to resist the attractions of the baggage, threw themselves upon it, and began to pillage. I knew by experience that if we halted in our pursuit we should restore courage to the terrified enemy, and make them turn again. Some few shots were to be heard at the other side of the town, almost at the gate; by dint of prayers more than by threats I succeeded in getting together a handful of troops to follow me, and drove off the Austrian sharp-shooters. I was on the road to Bologna; no trace of the divisions coming from that direction. What could have become of them? I sent out a reconnaissance of fifty men, followed by another troop of the same number, to support them if necessary. Just as the latter were starting off at a trot, I heard a cry:

'There are the enemy's cavalry!'

I looked round, and to the right perceived a thick cloud of dust on a cross-road, with deep ditches on either side, leading into the Bologna road. This body was cut off, and was being pursued by some of our cavalry. I sent the Adjutant-General, Pamphile Lacroix, to summon them to yield, promising them that they should not be harmed. At the same moment a body of my grenadiers issued from Modena; I had only to cry: 'Halt! Front!' in order to bar the road. My 'guides' (guards attached to the Commander-in-chief) deployed at right angles with this battalion, but unfortunately without observing that a broad ditch separated them from the road, along which the enemy's cavalry were advancing; the guides thought they could attack it in flank. When my battalion was drawn up, I ordered them to present arms, but not fire without my orders, and mechanically passed in front of it, studying the map. I had advanced a few yards, when I suddenly saw Lacroix throw himself backwards, and fall from his horse. The enemy's detachment was advancing at a rapid trot, whether animated by the courage of despair, pursued from behind, barred in front, with large ditches on either flank, or whether they had not noticed this latter obstacle, I know not. They continued to advance, and were only at a short distance from me, when I wished to turn my horse, and get behind my battalion, so as not to be in their line

of fire, and to draw my sword; but a double incident occurred. I was accustomed to carry a stick with a spike at the end, a leather thong passed round my wrist, and the spike resting on my foot; but the case for the spike had been lost, so that, not to wound my foot, I had thrust the end of the cane into my stirrup; thus encumbered, the thong entangled round my right arm, and the left occupied in holding my horse, I could neither reach nor draw my sword, and, in spite of my orders, a shot was fired from the left of the battalion; that sufficed to produce a discharge, though the bayonet would have been enough to do the work. There I was, therefore, midway between my own troop, which was firing, and the advancing hostile cavalry. My horse was struck, and the shock of the charge threw it with me on its back, and at the same moment I received two sabre-cuts—one on the head, and the other across the right thumb. I was thrown senseless to the ground, and there trodden under foot. I heard afterwards that not one of the cavalry had escaped; they had all been either killed or made prisoners; and such must have been the case, for my guides, having advanced and discovered the obstacle presented by the ditch, had immediately turned and drawn up behind the grenadiers, who were then fighting with the bayonet, and, inspired by the sight of my danger, were giving no quarter. The most surprising—nay, almost miraculous—

part of the circumstance is that I, although I was the fifth or sixth to pass along the line of fire, only lost one captain of engineers attached to my staff. He was killed on the spot. Not one of the others was touched, not even by the enemy who collected round me, perhaps as a means of safety, perhaps because I was recognised, as I was wearing the full uniform of a Commander-in-chief.

The attentions that were lavished upon me restored me to consciousness. On opening my eyes I found myself in a house, surrounded by Generals, among them being Montrichard. I believe this was some three hours after the action. I was suffering horribly, not so much from my wounds, as I had lost a quantity of blood, and was, in fact, covered with it, as from the trampling of the horses, the combat having raged over me.

'This is your doing,' I said to General Montrichard. 'Had your troops taken part in the action, this mischance would not have befallen me; and not an enemy could have escaped had my combinations been carried out.'

His excuse was that, on reaching Fort Urbino, the regiment at the head of his column had no cartridges; that the train of artillery, at the end of both divisions, was still at Bologna, and that they had waited for it to come up.

'What!' I exclaimed, 'regiments campaigning

without cartridges? Why did you not discover it sooner? Were they all without them?'

'No; only the leading company.'

'Why did you not throw it aside and let the others take the lead? A little more, and we should have been driven back,' I added; 'and it would have been your fault entirely, as you could and should have made an important diversion.'

He dropped his eyes and made no reply. I should have done well to withdraw his command from him then and there. We should have been saved many disasters caused by him; but he belonged to the Army of Italy, and was only for the time being under my orders. Moreau was very vexed afterwards that I did not take this prudent step.

They informed me that the enemy were being followed, and prisoners brought in every moment. I gave orders regarding our position, and was transported to my headquarters at Modena. I was suffering greatly, less from my wounds than from the bruises caused by the trampling of the horses. The Generals of Division had followed me; I felt that I was not in a condition to continue in command and to lead the army; I offered the succession to the senior among them, who declined, and then to the others in turn. The position beyond doubt was difficult. It was pointed out to me that the main body of the

enemy was still distant; that, according to the plan for the junction of the Armies of Italy and Naples, which ought to take place in a few days, and according to the marches calculated both to Parma and Piacenza, they would naturally have a chief in Moreau; that I could be just as easily transported to Genoa by Bobbio as by the route we were now following, and even by the valley of the Po, as our success would be assured after this junction. These arguments decided me, and orders were given to continue the movement. We pushed on, therefore, towards the places of rendezvous, manœuvring on the right towards the Po, and spreading a rumour that we were going to raise the siege of Mantua, and that we were gathering forces for that purpose; this was done in order to attract the enemy to the left bank.

Embarrassed by the prisoners, among whom were some of superior and many of inferior rank, I caused them to be conducted to our outposts at Ferrara, after exacting from them a promise not to serve until an agreement could be arrived at for an exchange of prisoners; the baggage, in order to relieve us, was sent to Fort Urbino. I even gave the officers some pecuniary assistance, although they were at no great distance from their own troops; but far from observing the engagement promised, the Austrians had the bad faith to keep as prisoners the detachment of

cavalry sent to escort their officers to a place of safety.

They followed me, having obtained some reinforcements for their broken ranks, but without causing me much trouble. I felt sure that, sooner or later, they would fall into our hands after our junction was effected, which would certainly give us a decisive victory.

General Victor had debouched near Castelnuovo, making for Parma or Piacenza, and driving before him an Austrian division which had taken up a position on the Tidone. It was between these two towns, if I remember rightly, that this General sent me a letter from Moreau, stating that he was still in doubt as to the direction of the rest of his army—whether it should follow Victor; or whether it should debouch near Bobbio, or near La Bocchetta. The day even of his departure for either place was uncertain; but he said it would probably take place on the 20 or 21 Prairial, and it was now the 26th, so that allowing for twenty-four hours' delay, according to our calculations, and for the possible local difficulties of the march—for he had no enemies in either of the former directions—our junction ought to take place at latest on the 27th or 28th either at Parma or Piacenza.

The only obstacles were on my side; but I had declared positively, perhaps somewhat rashly, that I would surmount them, and I had succeeded,

MARSHAL VICTOR
DUKE OF BELLUNO

Paris, for Richard Bentley and Son 1892

Printed by Ch. Wittmann Paris

inasmuch as I had defeated the hostile body that awaited me at the outlet of the Apennines without the help of the two divisions that were coming up from Bologna. While waiting for the arrival of the Army of Italy, I rapidly continued my march towards the Trebbia and Tidone, and gave orders that our position should be occupied there without engaging in hostilities, as I had two divisions behind, manœuvring on the Po, which I had called up in order to bring them into line.

The enemy had sent a detachment into the citadel of Piacenza. We had to guard the entrance, and leave on our side of the town a rear-guard to stop the remains of the combatants at Modena from following us.

My sufferings were severely increased by the movement of the carriage in which I was laid. I anxiously expected Moreau, and could get no news of him. I hastened the advance of the two detached divisions, ordering them to come into line with all speed on the Tidone. It was on the 29th* that the others took up their position. Victor's regiment, already in position, had exchanged a few volleys; unfortunately, he had remained in person at Piacenza, where I was myself, but without informing me of the circum-

* 29 Prairial, year vii. (June 17, 1799), first of the three days' fighting which are together called by the name of the Battle of the Trebbia.

stance. He had charged his Brigadier-General, Charpentier, with the care of settling his position. Dombrowski's and Rusca's regiments arrived soon afterwards. All had orders not to fight; Rusca, notwithstanding the remonstrances of General Charpentier, insisted upon trying to force the passage of the Tidone; he partly succeeded, but was soon repulsed, in spite of the support of the two other divisions, who were compelled to take part in this unfortunate skirmish. All three were thrown into disorder.

As I was unable to mount a horse, I had given the command of the four divisions drawn up in line* to General Victor, with orders to take up his position on the Tidone, and drive the enemy to the other side; but this General had remained at Piacenza, unknown to me. Thenceforward all was confusion, and the disorder that followed the engagement may in great part be attributed to this cause. I could hear the firing at Piacenza, but without being able to foresee or to fear the consequence, as the great allied army could not yet be entirely united, and ought to be harassed on its right flank and rear if Moreau had attacked those points. This was what he most likely had done, as he did not appear on our left, and I had no news either of his march or his direction; the junction was always intended to be the chief object of our movements, especially of mine,

* Those of Victor, Dombrowski, Rusca and Salm.

with a view to attracting the enemy to me, and distracting their attention when in Piedmont. This junction was made—at least, virtually—when I arrived in Tuscany; and had it not been for the difficulty attending the transport of baggage by sea, the troops might have marched together along the Cornice road to Genoa, as has since been done. But the operations in the valley of the Po would have been far more important if the movements of the two armies had been simultaneous, according to the original agreement; and I am still convinced, although it is twenty-five years since the events, that our success must have been infallible had it not been for Moreau's hesitation.

By an inversion of the marching order, the reason for which I have now forgotten, General Salm, who commanded the advance guard, found himself behind the other divisions that were occupying positions on the Tidone, and which, when routed, fell back upon him and disordered his lines. He had the presence of mind to throw his men to the right of the road, and draw up there in order of battle; the enemy, pursuing eagerly, thus found themselves exposed to a flank fire, which compelled them to retreat. On receiving a report of these events, I ordered them to take up a position between the Tidone and the Trebbia; but it was urged against that proposal that there was no place suitable, and

that it would be better to recross the Trebbia, as a large number of fugitives had already done. I consented, although this could only be a rallying-position; the torrent was wide and fordable everywhere. Salm, however, received orders to remain where he was, to cover the army, form his advance guard, and send out scouts. Montrichard and Ollivier, still behind, were desired to hasten their advance, and to come and put themselves into line and support us. It was clear that the enemy, too, had made forced marches, and mustered on the Tidone. But where was the Army of Italy? In what direction? I could not tell.

Until the junction was effected, prudence commanded me not to risk a battle with such unequal forces. I had no choice but to retire; but if I went away, and the Army of Italy arrived over the mountains in the expectation of finding that of Naples, it would in its turn be isolated and exposed to certain loss. What excuse could I give if I did not venture it? Of course, the cry of 'treason' would have been raised. But that would not have been all. It was, indeed, stated in the Army of Italy that I had given battle before the junction from motives of personal ambition. It will be seen from these writings how devoid of foundation was this idea, and, besides, my own condition would have sufficed to prevent that. I passed a wretched night, tormented by the fear of being attacked next

morning before all our forces had come up, and also lest we should not be able to repair the disorder that had been caused that evening.

Day broke at last. Acting upon the reports received from the reconnoitring parties, I had myself carried to Borgo Sant'-Antonio, near the Trebbia, and thence along my line, which I found drawn up in good order. General Salm and the other Generals came to make their reports and observations. I made a few alterations, such, for instance, as changing the position to be occupied by the advance-guard if it were compelled to retreat; the two divisions behind, which I summoned back by means of a forced march, were to remain in reserve.

All appeared tranquil, and our troops seemed prepared to give the enemy a good reception. I intended to be beforehand with the enemy as soon as my two other divisions arrived, and unless they previously made an attack. General Salm, trusting in his troops and his position, which I wished to preserve as far as possible, had strict injunctions not to engage alone; immediately the first serious demonstrations were made, he was to fall back and take his place in the line. So much did he trust in the apparent tranquillity of the enemy, that he asked my leave to go and spend a few hours in Piacenza; I was less confident, refused permission, and did rightly, for, shortly afterwards, through my telescope, I per-

ceived at some distance a mounted troop on the look-out. Salm declared that it was a mounted reconnaissance that he had sent out; I answered that it was facing us, and that if the detachment belonged to us it would naturally turn its back to us; but he would not be convinced. I sent out to reconnoitre, although I was almost certain of what I had seen.

'Make haste!' I said shortly afterwards to him. 'Gallop to your position; that reconnaissance is advancing, and another troop is coming up behind it. You are going to be attacked; be ready to fall back.'

He went.

Firing soon began, and as from the wooded nature of the ground it appeared that the whole force opposed to us had not appeared, Salm sent to ask me for a company of grenadiers, declaring that with their help he could maintain his position. I took a different view of the matter, and in sending him the battalion asked for, which was to draw up in echelon and support him, I also sent him repeated orders to retire. This, unfortunately, he only did at the last extremity, which very nearly caused us serious loss. At the first gunshot my men were under arms. Our vanguard at length retired; the firing increased. I saw five large columns and a large body of cavalry approaching behind our troops. Wounded and fugitives came in in crowds. Salm, hard pressed, continued to

retire, fighting as he came; being wounded, he made over the command to General Sarrasin, who, wounded in his turn, gave it to the brave Colonel Lahure, who soon shared the same fate. The men, finding themselves without a leader, and not knowing what position in the line they were to take up, recrossed the Trebbia in disorder at another point, and covered the artillery and musketry that should have protected them. If the enemy, whose advance was continuing, had made an effort at this moment, I know not what would have become of us.

At length my lines got clear, and my batteries opened fire. The Austro-Russians made a vigorous onslaught on my line, and renewed it several times without causing us to move; their strength was great, and their cries and howls would have sufficed to terrify any troops except French ones. At length they drew off; the artillery fire gradually slackened on either side, and ceased entirely about ten or eleven at night.

We had already a large number of wounded. The close proximity of the armies required the utmost watchfulness; we passed the night under arms. The two rear divisions arrived; they required a little rest. They stopped for the time in the second line, while the first reformed and prepared to take the offensive, if opportunity offered, instead of continuing on the defensive.

Daybreak found the two armies facing each

other on either bank of the Trebbia. The cannonade began, but without much effect; it sensibly diminished after a few hours, and finally ceased altogether on both sides. We piled arms, as though a truce had been agreed upon. During the night I had decided upon taking the offensive, regardless of the superior strength of the enemy. My troops were excellent. and the French character lends itself to attack better than to defence; moreover, this was earnestly desired. The enemy did not expect to be thus taken unawares. All my plans were laid and orders given for nine o'clock in the morning, so that only one signal would have been necessary; but it only took place at noon, for, notwithstanding repeated orders, it was impossible to get the Montrichard division out of its bivouac. It did come up at last, but without its General, who remained behind.

At the first movement to arms, the enemy formed a line of battle, and the firing began. My columns boldly crossed the Trebbia and scattered the first line. Unluckily, the Montrichard division, having no leader, sent out a party of sharpshooters, flanked by some cavalry. The enemy's horse, weak at that particular point, made a sally to drive back this body, which was causing it inconvenience; the latter, terror-stricken, fell back upon the division and paralyzed its fire. Montrichard's cavalry, although superior, fell back, and

returned in disorder, followed by the enemy, and the whole division was thrown into confusion. I deployed my reserve of infantry to protect them, but the cavalry reserve, having failed to take up the positions indicated for them, so that they might support our weak points, lost time in coming up; the enemy took advantage of this to rally and make a charge. The gap made by the retreat of Montrichard's division, which I stopped and formed up at the edge of the river, left Ollivier's division exposed to a flank attack. It was compelled in its turn to retreat, as was also General Vatrin on the extreme right, but the movement was effected in good order, and it recovered its position. The same movement was executed upon the left, commanded by General Victor, who had surprised the Russians and thrown them into great disorder.

Meanwhile our cavalry reserves had come up and joined the fray. The confusion into which the enemy had been thrown gave us time to rally and to form up again into a line of defence. The enemy soon renewed the attacks of the previous evening, but found only an immovable wall of steel. Their loss of men was enormous, but unavailing; and at length, wearied and worn out, they ceased their attack and retired to their positions. Night fell, but the cannonade continued on both sides, lest either should forget the presence of the other; but it ceased at length. I

received disastrous accounts of our losses. Nearly all our Generals and superior officers were more or less seriously wounded; our loss of men, in killed and wounded, was enormous for so weak an army. Not the least serious part of it was that nearly all our ammunition was exhausted. These events occurred on the 29 and 30 Prairial, and 1 Messidor (June 17, 18, 19, 1799).

CHAPTER X.

Absence of Moreau—Victor's Delay—Flight of Victor—Plans for Retreat—Difficulties of the March—Modena and Sassuolo—Hesitation of Moreau—Blockade of Mantua—Concentration near Genoa—The Army of the Alps.

No news arrived of Moreau, nor of the Army of Italy, nor of the detachment from Bobbio, which ought to have come up behind the enemy's right. It was clear from the position of the Austro-Russians in front of us that they felt no uneasiness as to their rear. We had been very much weakened; we had scarcely any general or commissioned officers left, scarcely any ammunition, a formidable army before us, the batteries of Piacenza, as well as another considerable one on the other side of the Po, barring our road, the survivors of the battle at Modena, reinforced by some troops from the blockade of Mantua, who had come up on our rear near Piacenza—such was our situation. We must infallibly be attacked next morning, and if we were beaten, all would be lost. I had done my utmost to effect a junction; my efforts were fruitless. We had to preserve the remaining

two-thirds of the army in order to get out of this very awkward position, and try our fortune elsewhere. It was, of course, painful to leave a battlefield where the Army of Naples had so much distinguished itself, and acquired so much glory; but its safety was the first consideration. The Generals having explained to me their fears, the superiority of the forces opposed to them, the want of ammunition and provisions, I reluctantly decided upon retiring from this bloody field, and orders were given for the movement to be made at midnight precisely, on the 2 Messidor (June 20).

Our army was to march in three columns, leaving behind the main-guard and outposts to form a curtain to cover their movement, until the enemy attempted to advance, when they were to fall back upon their respective corps. Montrichard's division was sent forward to open up the road that we were to follow towards Parma and Modena. It was necessary to avoid the battery on the Po and to get round Piacenza; a road was made during the night. After I had assured myself that all my orders had reached their destination and would be fully carried out, the army moved noiselessly at midnight precisely to recross the Nura; the point at which the three columns were to join was Cadeo. Scarcely had Montrichard's division gone a few miles ahead of us, scarcely had the right and centre columns passed the Nura and formed

up beyond it, when the main-guard appeared, as well as the small body that was observing the castle of Piacenza, followed by the leading troops of the enemy. It would have been very fortunate for us if we could have passed this defile without being harassed; but unhappily Victor's division, which, with the flank company of General Calvin, made up the third column, only started at six in the morning, instead of at midnight. Thus they lost a start which would have been as valuable to them as it was to the others, and also the precious advantage of putting the defile of the Nura between them and the enemy; the bridges could easily have been defended by a few troops. The enemy, as yet unprepared to attack, noticed this retrograde movement, pursued the column, and discovered that there were only a few scouts left along the whole line.

General Victor was pursued and hard pressed, as I could hear plainly, being only a short distance off; but I imagined that the battle was taking place on both banks of the Nura. An aide-de-camp from the General came to beg me for help. In order to rescue him, I caused the whole centre column to recross the river, half to drive back the enemy in front, and the other half to execute a flank attack on their left. We succeeded. Being thus freed, both crossed the Nura once more, and continued, without being too much harassed, their movement upon Cadeo, where

the three columns were to join. Those of the right and centre arrived there, but the left tarried; however, hearing no firing, I concluded that the movement was being quietly carried out. Our troops were resting, when some horsemen appeared at full gallop from the direction of the left column, followed by a crowd of fugitives in such terror that I preferred allowing them to pass to trying to stop them. An officer of General Victor at length rode up to ask for help. I immediately sent my reserve, but on reaching the point mentioned, it found neither friends nor enemies, only all the artillery abandoned by the column. The troops had been scattered and fled, some into the mountains, carrying alarm to Genoa, others, as I afterwards heard, to Castel Arquato.

One of the regiments lost its flags; I have forgotten how. On hearing of this incident, I sent out a number of artillery horses, and rescued all the guns belonging to the column, which was brought back to me by the reserve sent to the assistance of General Victor, who was nowhere to be found. Then we continued our march with no further annoyance till the morning.

General Montrichard, who led the march, informed me that the enemy were in front of him, but not stationary. It was important to secure the passage of the Taro, and I sent him word to hasten his advance. At length I had intelligence

from General Victor, who stated briefly that his troops, sorely pressed by the enemy, had dispersed, that the rout had begun, and that, to his great regret, he had lost all his artillery; that, unless he received contrary instructions, he should make for Borgo San Donino. That was the very place for which I was bound.

'Set your mind at rest,' I replied, 'as to your artillery. The detachment that I sent to your help, when you begged for it at Cadeo, where I then was, reached the spot where you ought to have been, and found neither friends nor foes; but I caused your artillery to be brought in without opposition. I will restore it to you the first time we meet.'

This natural and simple remark cut General Victor* to the quick, and I do not believe he has yet forgiven it.

I have never received a satisfactory explanation of this curious event. One grave fault was that of not quitting the battlefield at midnight, which would have given him six hours' start of the enemy. It seems that later on, while crossing the Nura, some disorder had occurred which had not been repaired, and that the appearance of a few Cossacks had sufficed to increase and turn it into a rout; for, although we were but a short distance away, we heard no sound of musketry.

* Victor Perrin, created Marshal of France and Duke of Belluno in 1807, after the Battle of Friedland.

I have since heard that Moreau only came down from Genoa by the Bocchetta on the 2 Messidor, the very day on which I was leaving the Trebbia, that the Austro-Russians retreated from the Nura, only leaving General Ott with a division, and possibly another small troop, to follow us. If the men of the third column were really as fatigued as General Victor declared, there were certainly no symptoms of it evident in their flight, and they would have been much safer had they held their ground.

On reaching Borgo San Donino, whither Victor had preceded me, I drew up fresh instructions for continuing our retrograde movement. The latter General was to return to the Apennines by the pass through which he had come, and troops were successively to hold all the outlets, menace the flank of the enemy that was pursuing me, and thus cover the march of the rest of the army, which was to make for Modena and Bologna with the baggage, place the guns taken from the enemy in Fort Urbino, draw thence fresh ammunition and provisions, take from the two principal towns sufficient food to last them for the five or six days necessary to cross the Apennines, and go to Pistoia and Lucca. It was the more important to guard the mountain passes, as it was indispensable that our junction should be effected near Genoa, and, if these passes were left undefended, the enemy, by taking pos-

session of them, might reach Pontremoli and Sarzana before us, and again cut off our communications by superior forces. True, they might have forced these outlets, and thus isolated me from the Army of Italy; I had foreseen this possibility, and determined to defend myself inch by inch. By my marches and movements I should have attracted a large body of troops to me in Tuscany, in the Roman States, even as far as Naples, by relying upon the strongholds. It was with this object that I had brought with me, and left in Rome, a pontoon train to enable me to cross the Garigliano and Volturno.

This movement, however, of the enemy's forces was not much to be feared, for the Army of Italy was certain to be doing something somewhere, and it was not likely that Generals Souvorof and Mélas, leaders of the Allied Armies, would risk themselves between two French armies; prudence, nevertheless, necessitated these dispositions; nothing should be left to chance, and, as time was precious, I lost none in having them carried out.

I sent for General Victor in order to have information from him: first, as to why he had been so late in starting from the field of the Trebbia; and secondly, upon all that had taken place on each side of the Nura. He answered that he was busy settling his men in camp, and that he would come later. I wished also to

communicate my new instructions to, and to come to a clear understanding with, him, as we were about to part. An hour or two having passed without his arrival, I sent again. He replied that he was tired, and had gone to bed. It was very obvious, therefore, that he wished to avoid a disagreeable explanation upon all that he had done. My instructions were therefore conveyed to him, and we continued our march; but scarcely had I left Borgo San Donino when an aide-de-camp came up at full gallop to tell me that the division was attacked. We were not far away, and he begged me to suspend my movement, and even to come back to their help. General Vatrin, who was beside me, said:

'Nonsense! it is only a few Cossacks, like the other day.'

This speech was repeated to General Victor as coming from me, and contributed not a little to increase his bad temper. A few minutes later I was told it was only a skirmish; a piquet had kept a bad look-out, and had been surprised by the enemy.

I therefore answered merely, 'General Victor has his instructions; let him conform to them,' and continued my route.

I have forgotten to say that we were constantly followed by a large and ever-increasing number of waggons, which added to our difficulties, notwithstanding my repeated orders to do away with

them. Those who drove them, guessing that prompt measures would probably be taken, hastened to unharness and empty, and even to burn them. Nearly all our wounded had been deposited at Piacenza, and, as usual, recommended to the enemy's kindness; some few had, however, followed us. I had ordered that each baggage-waggon and cart should take one or two, and this had at first been done, but the proprietors of these vehicles had left the poor fellows in the places where we stopped for the night. I was indignant at this. Several of them were put under arrest, but nothing could be proved against them at the inquiry. They declared that the wounded could not bear the jolting of the waggons, and, unluckily, now it was too late to verify this statement. The burning of these carts freed us somewhat, and it was the real owners who suffered; but it was a necessary sacrifice, because of the trouble they caused us. We kept, however, a few for the transportation of our wounded as far as the nearest towns.

The army continued its movement, occupying the Apennines, or marching with the baggage along the highroads. We had to seize Reggio, and fight at Modena and Sassuolo. Had we not been compelled to obtain provisions to take us over the Apennines, I should have avoided every engagement at these last places; but as the Apennines offered no resources, I took up my

position at Modena, after opening the road to Reggio. The enemy, who had at first displayed but few troops, attacked my entire line with a force very superior to mine, and rendered all the road to Pistoia, where General Calvin was, very disturbed. However, they made no stand, and hastened into the mountains. My aide-de-camp, Lacroix, followed them, and carried Sassuolo at the point of the bayonet, an affair which gained him much honour; he compelled 600 men to lay down their arms, took two flags and two pieces of cannon, and thus opened the communication for us who were engaged at Modena. We also gained a victory there, and maintained our position. Meanwhile, we collected provisions, and levied a contribution, which brought in very little, to punish the town for a rising that had taken place, in which many soldiers had been assassinated and pillaged; some of them could thus be indemnified. The combat finished at nightfall. The enemy had passed the river Crossolo at three or four points, but had always been repulsed. We also made a few prisoners.

Before daybreak the army continued its march, leaving its positions to return to the Apennines. Montrichard's division, passing by Bologna, was to bring away the ammunition from Fort Urbino, and to leave there the artillery and military chests taken from the enemy. I do not remember what became of the prisoners; they were perhaps

returned, to the number of 500 men, for on such a march they were a serious inconvenience, as they had to be watched and fed. (They were meant to have been exchanged later on for a similar number of our men.) We thus regained our old positions in the Apennines, without being molested, although we were followed. My head-quarters were established at Pistoia while waiting for news of General Montrichard and the Army of Italy, whom I presumed to have made a movement towards Tortona, as they had not debouched on our side when I expected them.

(It would be useless to follow the details of our ulterior movements: all that bears upon my military operations is entered in my registers of correspondence. Besides, this historical narrative is for you alone, my son; I write it rapidly, disconnectedly. My public and military life belongs to history; the documents and materials in my possession may serve to establish and to rectify or refute errors. These are sure to exist, seeing with what partiality historians describe the conduct of men who have figured on the world's stage, and how, without having been either actors in, or witnesses of, the scenes they describe, they present men and facts according to their own view, and according to the spirit of faction or party by which they are animated. The plain truth is narrated in my correspondence, and in this book. I have only inserted circumstances which touch

me closely, and which do not appear in my reports or my official correspondence. I took care, out of kindness, to erase all personal circumstances, to spare the men who did not like me, because I was able to convict them, either verbally or by unofficial letters, of their cowardly or disloyal conduct both towards the Republic and towards myself personally.)

We took up, as I have said, our former positions, and re-entered into communication with Moreau and the Army of Italy. The latter had descended the Apennines by the Bocchetta, and had, at the foot of the mountains, a battle with one of the divisions of the great Allied Army on the very day upon which I retreated from the Trebbia. Had they come down sooner, it is probable that all the forces of Generals Souvorof and Mélas would not have attacked me, as they would have feared for their right flank had they placed themselves between two fires, which they must have done had the little body under General Bellegarde been forced. General Moreau has never explained his conduct, although I have often pressed him to do so by word of mouth, by letter, officially, and by public summons. Why these delays? I am sure there was no ill-will on his part, but merely hesitation, which was in his nature. I cannot say the same for his advisers. Among them was one man in particular* who had

* General Gouvion Saint-Cyr.

great influence, and was inspired by an unjust animosity—it was more than unfriendliness—against me. It was this man, I have since been told, who most powerfully contributed to augment this natural tendency to delay. What matters any detriment to the public weal, so long as private spite can be gratified! An explanation of this will come in good time, and I will not anticipate it. I prefer to take up the thread of my narrative. Moreau returned to the positions whence he had started, having been warned that Generals Souvorof and Mélas were retracing their steps with a portion of their forces in order to effect a junction with General Bellegarde.

While at Lucca I received a note from the Commandant of the fortress of Mantua, informing me that he was blockaded, but not attacked; that he had a good and well-disposed garrison, and that the place was sufficiently well provisioned to stand a long siege. I hastened to communicate this reassuring report upon the condition of a place so important to us. We continued our retreat in order to concentrate ourselves with the Army of Italy within the boundaries of Liguria. All our baggage was embarked at Lerici, on the Gulf of Spezzia; the infantry and cavalry passed over the Cornice road, and I went to Genoa, whither I had been summoned by Moreau to consult as to our future operations, although I was under his orders.

My health was in a very bad state indeed; my wounds were not yet healed, I spat blood, I had violent pains in my chest, and a sort of general inflammation, caused by the vexations and annoyances to which I had been abandoned, by long nights and excessive work, under most difficult circumstances; and I was worried by many different events which, with a little goodwill, loyalty and honesty, could not have failed to be productive of the best results. In fact, notwithstanding the great superiority of the forces opposed to me, which had been hitherto victorious, and notwithstanding the great opinion entertained by the world of the Russians, who now for the first time had crossed swords with the French; moreover, although the Austrians never minded being beaten, and always recovered their pluck, because they were at least three hundred to one; and finally, in spite of the insurrections that had become almost general, I maintain that the Army of Naples could still have faced anything, if they had not had such a number of wounded and sick to look after, as well as having to provide all the garrisons in the States of Naples and Rome. Nevertheless, with our small resources, and the detached troops belonging to the Army of Italy (which we should have been better without, considering how one half distinguished itself at the battle of the Trebbia, and the other half on the banks of the Nura), we faced every risk in order to free that army from

the position in which it was then placed, by drawing upon ourselves the undivided attention of the enemy's forces. And as a reward for this immense service, and this absolute devotion to public interests, we were left unsupported, at the mercy of a victorious enemy, with three times our strength, and no attempt was made to bring about the junction that had been agreed upon, or to attempt a powerful diversion, which was only made at last when it was too late.

We had begun well, despite General Montrichard's first fault, but the untimely combat upon the Tidone brought about a general engagement. We could not retreat without fighting, but that would have been, perhaps, the wisest course, as we heard nothing about the co-operation of the Army of Italy, which first hesitated, after announcing its coming, then marched too late, after hesitating too long, and finally only had to meet a small body, while I had the combined armies on my hands. We gained the third day's victory; we lost it afterwards by the terror-stricken rout of Montrichard's division. The enemy gave way at every point where they were attacked. In spite of the bravery and the howls of the Russians, they yielded like the Austrians, so much so that I was told many times over that Souvorof, a man of more bravery and originality than capacity, had lain down on the ground, declaring that he would kill himself if they retreated another step; but

this determination would no doubt have been useless had not the division of which I have been speaking been routed. Fresh troops came to fill up the gap, which obliged us to withdraw our wings, and thus gave the enemy breathing-space, and then the latter took the offensive with renewed fury. All was in vain, however; notwithstanding their superiority in numbers and their repeated attacks, they could not drive us from our position on the Trebbia.

Precaution alone dictated our retrograde movement. I was without ammunition. Only two Generals remained unhurt out of the whole Army of Naples; we had scarcely any officers left, and a third of the army was *hors de combat.* Moreover, we were surrounded. The enemy had spread the report of our total annihilation, in which they exulted. You have seen how, by opposing pluck and determination to force, we got out of our difficulties, taking with us about 5,000 prisoners, a dozen guns and flags, forcing passages everywhere, surmounting every obstacle, notwithstanding the misadventure on the Nura; and how we regained our passes and re-entered them, in order to effect our junction, after taking every precaution to fortify the outlets by which the enemy might have made an entrance and cut off our communications by Pontremoli and Sarzana. However, as I think I have already said, the larger portion of the enemy's

forces retreated on learning that Moreau was debouching from the Bocchetta, and had driven back General Bellegarde. This operation was performed too late; had it been carried out four or five days earlier, it could not have failed to bring about happier results.

The concentration of the two armies in the neighbourhood of Genoa was decided upon. It was not without keen sorrow that we found it necessary to abandon to themselves the garrisons of the territories of Naples and Rome, to evacuate Elba, Tuscany and Lucca. Instead of sending us the reinforcements of which we stood so sadly in need, a fresh army was formed on the Var or at Chambéry, under the command of General Championnet. It was called, I believe, the Army of the Alps. I insisted more strongly than before upon the fusion of the two armies, and upon the necessity of leave of absence to recruit my health.

CHAPTER XI.

A Valuable Collection Lost—Joubert Commander-in-chief—Fall of Mantua—Death of Joubert—Back in Paris—Action against Moreau—Landing of Napoleon—The 18th Brumaire—Reorganization of the Armies—Moreau's Double-dealing—The Army of the Grisons—Peace of Lunéville—Diplomatic Mission to Denmark.

DURING my first command in Rome I had begun a collection of objects of art, of curiosities and antiques, which I confided to the care of a faithful friend at the time of the invasion by the Neapolitan troops without any previous declaration of war. On my return to Rome, seventeen days later, I found it intact. It was considerably augmented by presents of pictures from the principal Romans, which I considered I might accept in return for important personal services that I was able to render them.

After the conquest of Naples, the French Government divided the objects of art among the Generals who had taken part in it, after a commission of artists had selected objects wherewith to enrich our museum in Paris. I had succeeded General Championnet, and the commission was

charged to set aside what should come to me. Some pictures, Etruscan vases, and ancient frescoes from the walls of Pompeii were given to me, valued at 800,000 francs (£32,000). I had them all packed and forwarded to Rome, with the treasures for the Government. In Rome I caused to be added to them all that I had acquired in that city, and the convoy continued its journey into Tuscany; its destination was Genoa, whence it was to go to Marseilles. I thought no more about it; but on reaching Genoa I caused inquiries to be made, unfortunately too late, at the merchant's office to which they had been consigned. They had never arrived, and I discovered afterwards that the waggoners had not been able to pass beyond Pisa in consequence of the risings; that having waited there a long time, and spent all their money, they had deposited these precious things there and gone away. We had just evacuated Tuscany; I had passed through it, stopping at Pisa to review an army; the boxes were inscribed with my name, therefore the intention of stealing them was clear, as I was never told they were there. Had I been told, I might have sent them on board a ship at Leghorn or Lerici. They were rifled and sold. The following year we returned to Tuscany. I made every inquiry and a strict search, but the robbers and pillagers had taken flight, so that I lost one of the finest private collections of curiosities and objects

of art then existing. Among them was a complete imitation of a dessert, with all the fruit made of marble, and a magnificent silver épergne; also a valuable collection of ancient and modern marbles, carved lava from Vesuvius, etc. I had spent a good deal of my own money. There were also the presents that I had considered myself at liberty to accept, and the greater portion—of course the most valuable and rarest for a private individual—came from the distribution made by order of the French Government. My regret at my loss was the greater inasmuch as I was able to talk about it. I had no reason to blush for that or for anything else in my long military career.

While I was in command at Naples, I had caused searches to be made, on my own account, at Santa Maria di Gati for tombs containing Etruscan vases. Six were discovered, and were left closed until my arrival; they were not to be opened except in my presence. But events never permitted me to think of them again, and they, too, were thus lost to me.

The French Government at length appointed a new Commander-in-chief, Joubert, for the Army of Italy, to replace Moreau. That of Naples was suppressed—united to the other; and I received the permission, so earnestly longed for, to return to France.

Moreau and I agreed to start together. I then learned by private means that Mantua, for

the strength of which the commandant had so readily answered, had capitulated. The details of this event were so precise, the means through which I had received the information so trustworthy, that doubt was to my mind impossible. However, Generals Moreau and Joubert, and his chief of the staff, Suchet, declared that the news was false, and spread with a purpose, and that they had much more recent and trustworthy information. Of course, I wished to believe them; but, on the other hand, I could not doubt the honesty of my informant. This uncertainty was terrible, on account of the events which would soon come to pass; for if Mantua had really yielded, the besieging force would become an important and valuable reinforcement for the allies. Their very inaction proved to me that they were waiting for the reduction of Mantua in order to recommence active operations. At length they marched. At the first intimation, Joubert collected his forces and started; I cautioned him to be circumspect, to beware how he advanced too far, and to assure himself of the truth of the intelligence, because if Mantua had fallen, the forces would no longer be of equal strength.

Moreau and I had chartered some feluccas at Genoa; I had been waiting several days for him, when he sent me word that General Joubert had begged him to remain with him, so I started

alone, hugging the shores of the Cornice towards Savona, Oneille, Nice, and Toulon, not without some uneasiness respecting the pirates who swarmed in those waters. I was, however, escorted by a small armed boat, which scoured all the creeks and small harbours. I was within two or three days of Genoa, when I heard that Joubert had been killed,* the army routed, and the news of the fall of Mantua confirmed.

From Toulon I travelled by easy stages to Paris, where the somewhat cool reception given me by the Directory was made up for by public opinion. No Government ever weighs in the balance past services with a present check, and never takes circumstances, means, etc., into consideration. They must always have victories. No doubt the principle is a good one, but justice and equity demand that everyone should receive some share of the recognition due to him. Now and again newspaper articles would appear blaming my recent operations. I had a correspondence with Moreau upon the subject, as he and his staff seemed not altogether strangers to these articles. I was tired of his arguments and hesitation. He was now back in Paris. At one moment he advised me not to notice these diatribes; at

* General Joubert was killed at the battle of Novi, July, 1799. His widow, *née* Mademoiselle de Montholon, became Marshal Macdonald's second wife. By this wife he had one daughter, afterwards Marquise de Roche-Dragon.—*Translator's note.*

another he undertook to refute them; then his papers, which ought to have come to him by road, had been mislaid. Losing patience, I at length told him that I would bring an action against him; and I did so, honestly and straightforwardly, but especially promptly. His defence was pitiable and confused; judgment was given in my favour, and that ended the matter.

I was not yet cured of my wounds, and fears were entertained respecting my chest. I was put upon a diet of milk and sago.

France was groaning under the weight of her arbitrary government. The Directory had neither credit nor consideration. It had made itself detested by the iniquitous 'Hostage Act,' and by its forced loans. Intrigues were on foot to compass its downfall, and I was asked to put myself at the head of the movement: I declined. I believe, but am not sure, that a similar application was made to Moreau, who also refused.

All at once the news was spread of the unexpected arrival at Fréjus of General Bonaparte from Egypt; all eyes were turned to him, and from thenceforward he was regarded as an anchor of hope and salvation. He sought me out with considerable eagerness. I was on fairly intimate terms with his wife,* and some of his brothers

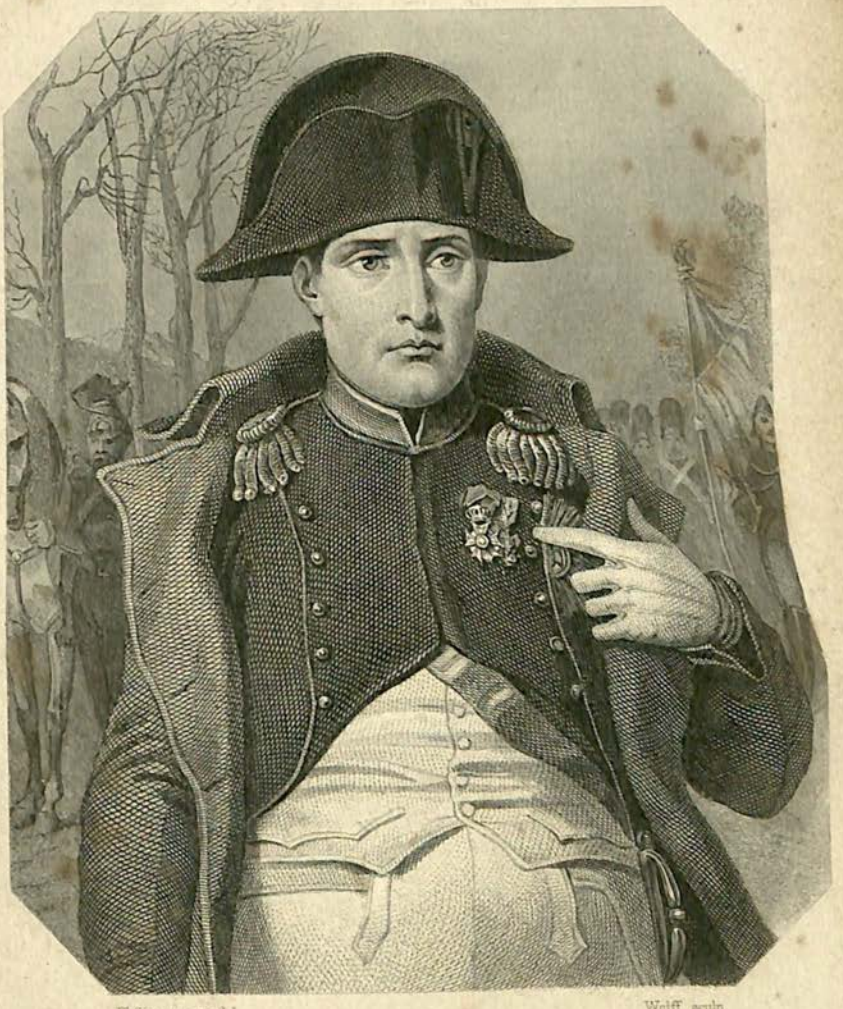
* Joséphine, daughter of Monsieur Tascher de la Pagerie, and widow of General Vicomte Alexandre de Beauharnais, married to Napoleon in 1796.—*Translator's note.*

and sisters. He desired precise information upon all that had passed in Italy. At a little dinner, at which Moreau was present, we gave him an account, and the opinion of my amphitryon was thenceforward settled in my favour.

The 18 Brumaire arrived. I took a considerable share in it.* I was in command at Versailles, and my first care, on arriving, was to close a Jacobin club, which was never reopened. The great struggle was to take place at St. Cloud; it nearly failed. Had it done so, we should all have fallen victims to the party which, to the misery of France, would have been triumphant.

The question of reorganizing the armies now arose. Moreau was to have that of the Upper Rhine, and I that of the Lower; but he worked so skilfully behind my back, that he succeeded in having them united in one, and the entire command placed in his hands. I was indignant at this double-dealing, and had a somewhat acri-

* Here occurs in the Marshal's MS. a paragraph that runs thus: 'I have omitted to say that I was filling then, or perhaps later, the functions of infantry-inspector; but I must repeat that I am writing without maps or journals, only from memory, and may be mistaken. I also write these Recollections in great haste, without correcting or re-reading them, which I will do later when I have more time.' The MS. has not been revised, probably not looked at again, for it has remained just as it was, without any correction or alteration. Macdonald was not infantry-inspector at the time of the 18 Brumaire. He was appointed by the First Consul on the 1 Pluviose, year viii. (January 21, 1800).



Philippoteaux del Wolff sculp

NAPOLEON.

Paris, for Richard Bentley and Son 1892

Printed by Ch. Wittmann Paris

monious conversation on the subject with the First Consul, who admitted having yielded to Moreau's pressure, but expressed his regrets to me. He added that he had believed that Moreau and I had agreed upon this together, and that Moreau had certainly given him to understand that such was the case.

'How could it have been so,' I asked, 'after all that passed between us in Italy, and after the explanation of these events that you yourself had from us at your own table?'

'That is true,' he replied, adding, 'Your health is not yet quite restored. Take care of yourself, and I will fulfil my promise presently.'

The first Army of Reserve was being then organized, and he kept for himself the command, having Berthier under him. He attempted and achieved the famous passage of the St. Bernard, and the victory of Marengo crowned the bold and dashing enterprise.

Later on a second Army of Reserve was formed at Dijon, the command of which was given to me. It crossed Switzerland, and took the name of the Army of the Grisons,* which pointed pretty clearly to the mission with which it was charged. It was to act in the Rhetian Alps between the Armies of Italy and the Rhine, and to support them both.

A month's truce was arranged. I had orders,

* 6 Fructidor, year viii. (August 24, 1800).

or authority, to concert operations with Moreau, who was very anxious for an interview; he was even desirous of coming to my headquarters at St. Gall; but it was difficult for him to leave his army, and I went to Augsburg, where he was established, and thence to Ratisbon, Landshut, and Munich, whence I returned to St. Gall. We settled our plan, and Moreau took it to Paris to explain and get it authorized.

I took with me on my journey General Mathieu Dumas, my chief of the staff, Pamphile Lacroix, and General Grouchy. I had been on distant terms with the latter since we had been in Holland; but flattered by, and grateful for, my reception, he related to me all the trickery and intrigue set in motion at Moreau's headquarters in Genoa to leave the Army of Naples unsupported, and to get out of its difficulties as best it could. He told us that the chief promoter had been General Gouvion Saint-Cyr, who had not forgiven me for having replaced him in Rome, as if I had had anything to do with his quarrel with the Government Commissioners who recalled him. Moreau apparently failed to see the trap, and his hesitation, prolonged as it was, became tantamount to a desertion of me. You know the results and consequences of his proceedings.

Moreau's presence in Paris brought about a change in the commands. He was to take over that of Italy, and I to succeed him with the Army

of the Rhine. I had orders to prepare for this change; but while I was doing so, a courier informed me that the original plan was to be adhered to—that Moreau was to return to his post, and I to remain at mine. At the same time, I received instructions to commence hostilities, and to begin operations upon the lines agreed upon with Moreau and the Army of Italy, to which they had been communicated.*

Situated thus between the Army of the Rhine on my left, and that of Italy on my right, communicating and acting as the centre for both, I had more natural difficulties to surmount than enemies to conquer. The latter were entrenched in all the passes of the Alps, which I had to cross in all their breadth as far as Trent on the Adige, especially the Splugen, Tonal, etc., which were covered with snow and ice. More than once discouragement nearly overcame my men. I went in person to all the most dangerous places, sounding the snow, trying the ice, and measuring the depth of the abysses that surrounded us. Avalanches had swallowed whole squadrons. Finally, by dint of perseverance, boldness, or, I perhaps should say, rashness, we succeeded—more by good luck than good guidance, but not without great losses—in gaining the plateau of the Splugen where the monastery is situated, and eventually the right bank of the Adige. Whether

* General Brune commanded the Army of Italy.

I advanced or retreated the danger was equal. I therefore could not hesitate. This adventurous march forced the enemy to retreat precipitately before us, to evacuate that portion of the Alps from the Vorarlberg to the Tyrol, and helped the other two armies in their operations. The first thing done was to conclude armistices, to which I was a party, and the peace of Lunéville crowned the campaign.*

I passed the remainder of the winter and the beginning of spring at Trent, whence I was ordered to bring my army back into Switzerland, across Italy. I raised my cantonments and started; on the road a courier brought me my nomination to the post of envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to the Court of Denmark,† with orders to return immediately to Paris. All my tastes were opposed to such a career; but the post was offered to me as a military operation covered by a diplomatic cloak.

* Treaty of Lunéville, between France and Austria, signed February 9, 1801.

† Nomination dated Germinal, year ix. (March, 1801).

CHAPTER XII.

At Copenhagen—Diplomacy against the Grain—Recall to France—Monsieur de Talleyrand—Trial of Moreau—Napoleon elected Emperor—The Legion of Honour—In Disgrace—Purchase of Courcelles—Recalled to Active Service—Domestic Arrangements.

THE kingdom of Denmark, especially its capital, was threatened by an English fleet: I was informed that the Government had asked for a French General to undertake the defence of the country, and that they had thought of me. I will not deny that I was flattered by the choice, and anxious to join my name to the events of which that country was to be the scene; but I had the firmest intention, which I kept, of quitting diplomacy as soon as the military part of it was concluded. I therefore started for Paris. I did not expect to get further than Nevers, for, while changing horses in that town, I heard of the disaster at Copenhagen—abandoned by Sweden, Russia and Prussia, all of whom were bound by treaties to make common cause with Denmark. However, on reaching Paris, firmly convinced that my mission was at an end, the First Consul

informed me that there was still hope of renewing the Quadruple Defensive Alliance, and desired me to start, *viâ* Berlin, promising that if peace were the result of the events at Copenhagen, he would grant my request, and recall me immediately.

On reaching the capital of Prussia, I soon learned that Russia had broken away from the alliance by a treaty with England, leaving power to the three other countries to adhere to it. I immediately sent a special messenger to the First Consul with this news, and, foreseeing that the other Powers would adhere, asked leave to return; the answer I received was that, as I had got so far, I should go on and learn the intentions of the Danish Government, and that if peace were decided upon my expedition should be regarded as a mere journey, and I should be recalled at once. I thus went to replace your mother's father,* who was awaiting my arrival to go and take up the same position at Stockholm. I had then no idea that I should ever be united to your lamented mother, who was then quite young, and whom I had hardly seen. That was in 1801, and it was not till more than twenty years later that the marriage took place, which was so sadly terminated in less than four years.

Previous to my audience at Court, I was fully

* Monsieur de Bourgoing, whose daughter became the Marshal's third wife.

confirmed in my opinion that Denmark could never struggle alone against so formidable a naval Power as England. The attack on the capital, the destruction of a large number of her ships, the successes of the bold and rash Admiral Nelson, who continued to fight in spite of the orders of his chief, and notwithstanding a brave defence which merited a different fate, brought about an armistice which was existing when I arrived, watched by the English fleet as I passed through the Great Belt. My mission, therefore, brought about none of the anticipated results, and my first despatch terminated by an urgent prayer to be recalled. I renewed this prayer for five months, but as peace was at that time being negotiated with England, it was deemed advisable to retain foreign ministers at their respective posts.

The preliminaries having been signed,* and peace being momentarily given to all Europe, it was presumed that the motives I had put forward would no longer exist. I was therefore sounded with respect to the embassy in Russia, occupied by General Hédouville, who, like me, was earnestly seeking his recall. At last I obtained mine, and quitted Copenhagen in the depth of winter. On my journey I experienced every discomfort of the season, which was very severe in the North, and after a month of painful,

* The treaty of Amiens between France and England, signed March 25, 1802.

fatiguing, and even dangerous travel I reached Paris, whence the First Consul had gone to attend the meetings at Lyons.

My stay in Denmark had not been without interest and pleasure. I was distinguished at Court, on good terms with the *corps diplomatique*, and well received in society. I studied the history of the country—its laws and customs. There I found a people who, with unbounded love for, and confidence in one of its sovereigns, blindly abandoned its liberty, and submitted itself to their absolute power. So far they have had no cause to regret their action, but I doubt whether any of their powerful neighbours would ever employ the same generosity in order to guarantee their subjects from the abuses of violence, tyranny, or despotism.

To return to what concerns myself. I had a suspicion that Monsieur de Talleyrand had some motives, that I could not penetrate, for wishing to keep me at a distance. I had written him strong representations upon this point in private letters, but as he might have been prejudiced or biased against me, I called upon him. He received me with cold civility. I warmly pointed out to him, in presence of his wife and several other persons, how ill he had behaved, and abruptly quitted his house. Since then I have ceased to hold any communication with this personage, who afterwards degraded more and

more his name and position. He has certainly from time to time made overtures to me, but in vain. I had judged correctly the sincerity of his affection. His ambition, however, had been amply satisfied at the Imperial Court as well as at that of the Bourbons; his supple mind, intrigues, and insinuations had secured this. When at last he came to be better known and understood, all parties agreed to throw him aside, and to let him extract what enjoyment he could out of a comparatively insignificant office,* and to live in regret, if not remorse. I admit having said too much about this individual, but it is because I know that he did me serious injury in the eyes of the First Consul by prejudicing him against me, and suggesting that I was a foe to his authority.

In 1804 commenced the famous trial of Moreau, and an attempt was made to implicate me in it by suggestions of an intimate friendship, which no longer existed. It seemed, however, to be recognised that my conscience was clear upon that point, and so I was only watched, and all my actions spied upon; but I was left in peace.

Shortly after this trial the First Consul was elected Emperor, and the Government having thus become monarchical, was surrounded by the attributes of monarchy. In order to obtain the dignity of Marshal, it was necessary to have had

* He was Grand Chamberlain.

the chief command of an army, and although this condition was not wanting to me, I was not included in the first or subsequent lists of nominations. I therefore had to content myself with thinking that I had deserved to figure upon them, and with the pride natural to me, added to the feeling that I was the victim of injustice, I took no steps to destroy groundless prejudices. The time came when I congratulated myself upon having acted as I did, for circumstances so favoured me that I was able to win my baton at the point of my sword on the field of Wagram.

In the year in which the Legion of Honour was founded, I was first made a simple Companion, together with all those who, like me, had received gifts of a sword of honour, and I was then promoted to be a Knight Companion (*Grand Officier*). My name must have passed unnoticed among the others, for in the suspected position in which I then was living it could only be regarded as a favour.

Like everyone else, I had signed the address of election to the Empire, but rather as a means of warding off worries and persecution than with any hope of obtaining good for myself. I had no reason whatever for opposing it, still less for being jealous or desirous of it. My isolation annoyed me on account of your elder sisters. They had received an excellent education at Madame Campan's, but the sight of their friends

making brilliant marriages at the Imperial Court made me dread lest they should become enamoured of these exalted positions. But their own good sense, their judgment beyond their years, my advice, and the affection they bore me, convinced them that I was innocent of this disgrace, and they resigned themselves to whatever fortune might be in store for them.

I had just bought this property at Courcelles whence I write to you, and which I intend you to have some day; but notwithstanding the pleasures of a country life, and the delight of being at rest, my military ardour blazed up at the accounts of every fresh victory. However, this ardour quieted down when I remembered that my career was advancing, so much so that it was not without some alarm that I received orders to join the Army of Italy, after five years spent in retirement, to put myself at the disposal of Prince Eugène Beauharnais,* Viceroy and Commander-in-chief. I was just about to return here with your sisters, who had finished their education, and whom I had removed from school. I was only spending a few months with them in Paris during the winter to perfect their accomplishments.

I think I received the order early in April, and at first I concealed the nature of it from them.

* Son of the Empress Josephine, by her first husband.—*Translator's note.*

The Minister could not tell me in what capacity I was to go, nor did he know much about it. He showed me the original of the Emperor's letter, which was remarkable for its brevity. It ran almost as follows:

'MONSIEUR LE DUC DE FELTRE,

'Convey orders to General Macdonald to betake himself to Italy, where he will receive fresh orders from the Viceroy, and I shall be grateful to him for the services he will thus render.

'(Signed) NAPOLEON.'*

Having but a few days left to make my arrangements, it was natural that I should think first of all of your sisters. I asked and obtained from the Emperor admission for them into the educational establishment founded for daughters of members of the Legion of Honour at Écouen, and then under the control of Madame Campan, their former schoolmistress at St. Germain. Our separation, as you will easily believe, was very painful; they thought of nothing but the fresh dangers to which I was to be exposed.

Before proceeding, I must go back a little to mention a circumstance that I had omitted. Some friends, placed by their rank near the person of Joseph Bonaparte, King of Naples, who was in command of an army in that country,

* The ministerial order is dated March 28, 1809.

represented to him that I might be of great service, as I had fought there some years previously. He had on several occasions testified goodwill towards me, and it was suggested that he should ask the Emperor for my services. The latter, commanding the Grand Army in the North of Germany, had, I believe, established his headquarters at Osterode during the siege of Dantzic, which followed the bloody Battle of Eylau, where both sides claimed the victory, although the best and most impartial judges on our side considered it more than doubtful. The Emperor consented, and caused orders to be sent me by General Count Dejean, who was temporarily holding the office of War Minister, to go at once to Naples, and place myself at the disposal of his brother.* This was not a military order; for, contrary to the usual forms, no letter of service was sent to me. It was therefore clear that King Joseph was at liberty to employ me as he pleased, either with the Neapolitan troops or as a civilian; for the Imperial Generals in the Army of Naples have alone the right of commanding French troops with their letters of service.

My blood boils even now, and my fury rises, as I write these lines, and think to what a degree of abasement I should have fallen had I been desired to command Neapolitan soldiers. I, who had fought and annihilated them at Civita-Castellana,

* The ministerial authorization is dated February 28, 1807.

at Otricoli—who had completely finished them at Calvi, although on all these occasions we were less than one against twelve or fifteen! I, who had been witness of their cowardice, their desertion, and their flight! I, who had invaded their territory but a few days later! I say no more, and return to my departure for the Army of Italy in 1809.

CHAPTER XIII.

Departure for Italy—Untrustworthy Intelligence—A Bad Beginning—Arrival at Vicenza—Prince Eugène—Warnings and Defensive Measures.

A FEW days after receiving my orders I was informed that the Emperor, while at the opera, had had intelligence that the Austrians had crossed the Inn on April 12. It occurred to me as probable, and my idea was eventually verified, that on the same day they would most likely commence hostilities and operations in the North of Italy. I therefore started the day after the Emperor had received the news. I only halted for a few hours at Turin to see General Cæsar Berthier, who was employed there, I forget in what capacity. He informed me that hostilities had been recommenced, and told me of the first success of our troops — five or six hundred prisoners taken, and two pieces of artillery. He had first transmitted the news to Paris in a telegraphic despatch, adding that the whole army was advancing. I was still so far away, that I feared I might not be able to come up with them

before some important engagement: and, in spite of the entreaties of the General and his wife that I would stay and rest at least four-and-twenty hours, I started again immediately.

When I reached Milan, I found that no one knew anything of the supposed victory that had been telegraphed from Turin to Paris; even the whereabouts of the army was unknown. I was a stranger in the town, though I had spent a few weeks there in 1798, just before I was sent to take the command in Rome; I had then known a few French officers, but they were all absent now.

However, a certain Signor Bignami, a banker, having accidentally heard of my arrival, came to see me, and told me confidentially that he knew, from commercial sources, that the army had met with a check,* and was retreating, though few people had as yet been informed. I tried to prove to him that he was mistaken by quoting what General Berthier had said; but he shook his head, and his assurance began to make me think that there really was something in his commercial intelligence. It was too late for me to present my respects to the Vice-Queen; but among other names that he mentioned to me as belonging to persons attached to her Court, he spoke of Comte Méjean, whom I knew a little, and offered to take me to the palazzo where he

* Battle of Sacilio, lost by Prince Eugène, April 16, 1809.

dwelt. We learned that Monsieur Méjean was at the Council. I gave my name to the usher, desiring him to inform that personage that; as I was only passing through Milan on my way to the army, I should be much obliged if he could tell me where the headquarters were, and whether the Vice-Queen had any commissions for her husband. On hearing my name, he quitted the Council, and hastened to me; he took me aside, and confided to me that a courier, the previous night, had brought intelligence even more disastrous than that of which Bignami had spoken. The letter brought by the courier was couched in more or less the following terms:

'Pressed by the enemy, and yielding to the cries of the inhabitants that I was abandoning them, and to the desire of the army, who wished to fight for their homes, I have given battle, and lost it!'

Thereupon I said that I must at once have horses and start. He urged me to come and see the Vice-Queen, and offered to accompany me, assuring me that she would forego etiquette. But, as I was in travelling dress, I begged him to tell the Princess that I thought the best means of showing my devotion, and of being agreeable to her, would be to go direct to her husband's headquarters. Before leaving Méjean, he begged

me to say nothing to Bignami, who would be sure to cross-question me. I limited my replies to saying that at Court they could add nothing to the news he had already received, and that no belief was placed in it. We separated, and I got into my carriage very downcast at this rebuff.

A combat in Italy, however serious it might be, could only be of secondary importance. The decisive point was Germany, where the Emperor was commanding in person. But it might have a bad effect upon the Italian mind, already prejudiced against us, kept under as they were, but not conquered; and upon that of the Germans and their armies, although they had been so often beaten, and their territory so often invaded by us. But they were like the teeth of Cadmus; no sooner was one army destroyed than another came to take its place. They seemed to rise out of the ground.

I had a high opinion of the military talents of the Emperor, who had so often performed miracles; I trusted him now, and I was right.

Between Brescia and Verona, at a place called Desenzano, on the Lake of Garda, I met a Colonel whose name I have forgotten. Still terrified at what he had witnessed and heard, and believing that the enemy were at his heels, he had just left headquarters, but was unable to tell me where they were situated. He was carrying orders to arm and provision all the forts

in Piedmont—in short, to put them into a proper condition of defence. The disaster must have been considerable to necessitate such hasty orders! This Colonel was in such a hurry, that I could obtain no details from him. Some leagues farther on I found the terror increasing, and it became worse as I drew nearer to the scene. I met a courier on his way from headquarters to the Emperor; not even he could tell me whence he had started, and all that I could extract from him was that he had been sent after this unfortunate battle.

At length I reached Verona. All was in confusion. The wounded were coming in in large numbers, as well as fugitives, riderless horses, carts, baggage-waggons, carriages, crossing each other, meeting, blocking the streets, and filling the squares; in short, all the horrors of a rout. The siege artillery stationed on the glacis had been promptly removed to Mantua. The authorities were without news, and crowded round me to ask for some. I could scarcely believe that I had come there in order to obtain information myself. Rumour said that the army was marching for Mantua, where it would rally; but it seemed to me impossible that, however great might have been the misfortune, they should abandon the high road to the Milanese capital. Notwithstanding all the warnings I received upon the dangers I should meet along this road, I resolved to

follow it, and was glad I had done so. Scarcely had I left the gates early next morning, when a courier appeared. He came from Vicenza, where he had left the Viceroy, who was just preparing to start for Verona. This courier was carrying orders to the siege-train to make for Mantua, an order which, as I have said, had been forestalled. I did not stop to interrogate this letter-carrier, as I was now within a few hours of headquarters.

I entered Vicenza, to the surprise of all who saw a carriage coming in the opposite direction to that followed by all the others, which would, moreover, have soon been followed by troops, had it not been for my unexpected appearance. News of my arrival soon spread, and the inn where I stopped was blocked with visitors and inquirers. The army was to a great extent formed of troops that I had had under my orders when I commanded in the Roman States and in Naples, so that I felt quite at home. Everyone gave me a different version of what had occurred, and, as usual, laid the blame upon the inexperience of their leader, the jealousy of the Generals, and so on.

The Viceroy, who from his windows had seen a post-chaise pass, suspected that I might have come, and sent several aides-de-camp to find out and to desire me to come straight to him. He received me cordially, or, I might say, effusively. He was even more taken up with what the

Emperor would say and write than with the affair itself.

'I have been beaten,' he said, 'at my first attempt in commanding, and in a bad place too. The Emperor will be furious; he knows his Italy so well!'

'What induced you to fight?' I asked. 'One can generally refuse a battle. And in such a position too, with that narrow gorge behind you, which made retreat so difficult in case of necessity! You are very lucky not to have had to do with a bold, enterprising enemy, otherwise every hope of safety for your army must have been abandoned.'

'That is true,' he answered. 'I yielded too easily to the prayers and complaints of the Emperor's subjects. I was surrounded, deafened by their cries that I was abandoning them without striking a blow. The army grumbled at having to retreat before a foe that they had so often vanquished before. I consulted and asked the advice and opinion of all the most experienced Generals.'

It seems that all the latter had been satisfied with a laconic answer, to the effect that he was the chief, that he had only to give his orders, and they should be carried out; that the responsibility was too great for them. Which, being interpreted, meant, 'Get out of the difficulty as best you can.' These answers having roused his wrath, he

only consulted his pluck, and without reflecting on possible consequences, gave battle and lost it.

'Never in future,' I said, 'give way to annoyance, or act precipitately. You see into what straits it has brought you. Where are you going now, and what do you mean to do?'

'Everyone is disheartened; no one speaks of anything but retreat. The orders are given and are being carried out at this moment.'

'Where is the enemy?'

'About three marches from here.'

'Three marches, indeed! What would you do if they were on your heels? Is not this the home of trickery? Let me look at your maps and see if there is not some way out of the hole. If I remember rightly, a little river runs across here somewhere, with a canal and a number of brooks, which might easily be defended; dispute the Alpone on your rear, then Caldiero, through which I have just passed, but which would be a better position for the enemy, then the Adige, etc. Remember that the great issue will be fought out in Germany. You will learn the results, not from messengers, but from the movements of your adversary*; if they are rapid, it will mean that they have been victorious; if they are slow, as at this moment, it will mean that nothing is settled yet; if they are beaten, your adversary will retire, because he will not wish to

* The Archduke John.

abandon his communications with the capital, nor to be flanked and cut off by the victorious army that has just defeated him.'

To these reasons I added others, not less powerful and convincing:

'If you retire without fighting from a position so easy to defend, the enemy will follow you. Where will you stop? On the rivers, or on the Alps? Now, if the Emperor is successful, and sends you orders to take the offensive again, you will have to try and force your way across these rivers. Shall you succeed with a discouraged army? It is doubtful. Do not let us therefore expose ourselves to such an accident, if we can avoid it; let us defend our ground foot by foot, and compromise nothing; finally, let us not risk a second battle, and do nothing unless we are sure.'

My arguments made an impression upon the mind of this really courageous and high-spirited young man. I continued:

'Summon the Generals in whom you have most confidence, tell them your intentions, and hear what they have to say.'

'I know that already,' he answered. 'Look here; there goes one of them with his division. He took no part whatever in the action, and is now one of the first to be off, besides giving the worst advice.'

He thereupon gave orders for the unharnessing of his own carriages, which were preparing to

start, and I returned to my lodgings to wait for the hour agreed upon for the meeting.

My arrival had produced a favourable impression in the army. I say it without vanity, ostentation, or pride. I was liked by my men, and they had confidence in me; I had always taken a paternal interest in them. It was well known that my disgrace was the result of prejudice and injustice, and they thought better of me for agreeing to serve in a capacity inferior to those I had previously occupied. Hope began to revive even amid these sad circumstances.

At the meeting there was present a large number of Generals and superior officers. The Viceroy explained the position of the army and the suggestions that I had made to him, and then desired me to lay before the meeting the extension that might be given to them, which I did very carefully, for fear of hurting the feelings of my audience. I was heard without interruption, but at the conclusion of my remarks General Grenier said, addressing himself to the Viceroy:

'Prince, no word has been said about the *moral* of the army, or about its present disorganized condition; I declare that it is such that I will not answer for my own division until it has had some days' rest behind the Adige at Verona.'

The others spoke on the same lines, and the Prince, promising to consider what had been put before him, broke up the meeting.

When we were alone, he asked me what I thought of General Grenier. I had had nothing to do with him, but we had met in the Army of the Sambre and Meuse, when I was leading thither from Holland fifteen or twenty thousand men from the Army of the North, just after his defeat in Germany and his retreat upon the Lahn and the Sieg. He had a good reputation as a General of Division.

'As for *moral*,' I added, laughing, 'that of the gentlemen who have just left us seems to me no less shaken than that of their men. But you have some who took no part in the action; keep them here and let the others go. They will suffice for the time being, and you can recall the others in a few days.'

He fell in with my suggestion. As a matter of fact, we only needed a small number to guard the passes, and if the worst came to the worst, we were not far from the Alpone, a torrent enclosed between high banks, which would serve us as entrenchments. A portion of the troops, therefore, especially those belonging to General Grenier, were allowed to go to Verona. General Pully's cavalry, which either had not been called up, or else had arrived too late to take part at Sacilio, received orders to reoccupy Padua, already evacuated by the general retreat that had been ordered when I arrived, and to which I had put a stop.

We had to consider the best provisional means of defence for ourselves in this land of trickery, and rode out to inspect them. The Viceroy was good enough to make me a present of two horses, as I was without my equipment, which did not rejoin me, I think, until the month of August. I had, however, procured what was necessary for the time being.

The bridge of Vicenza could be easily defended by means of slight works; I pointed out to the Viceroy what might be done, and asked him to order the Major of Engineers stationed there to carry them out. He called him and explained to him briefly what was wanted. I noticed that this officer did not understand a word of what was said to him, although he replied that he would carry out the instructions. I could not fail to observe it, simply from noticing the face of the officer in command of this important post, and I communicated my idea to the Prince, who thought I was joking.

'Call him back then,' said I, 'and ask him to repeat the orders you have just given him.'

The unlucky Major stammered and shamefacedly admitted that he had not understood.

'Why did you not ask me to repeat my orders to you?' inquired the Prince.

'I was wrong,' he replied, 'and I beg your Highness's pardon.'

A fresh explanation was given, and we rode away.

'See,' I said to the Prince, 'how easily mistakes occur. You would have gone away in peace, thinking that your necessary orders would be carried out. You did not observe that that officer, no doubt a very brave, good fellow, was not very bright; for if Heaven had endowed him with ever so small a share of wits, he would, on his own responsibility, have caused some temporary defences to be made at a point on which depended so much of the safety of his own men and of the army. Misunderstandings and blunders are often fatal, particularly in an army; therefore, when I give a verbal order, I always have it repeated over to me, and have found it a good plan.'

I advised him to adopt it, which he did in the future with good results.

CHAPTER XIV.

Defence of the Alpone—Retreat of the Archduke John—Combat on the Piave—An Incomplete Success—Capitulation of Prewald—Siege of Laybach—Advance to Gratz.

We remained three days in our position, and the *moral* of the troops was already improved. While waiting for news of what was going on in the heart of Germany, the enemy made some feeble demonstrations; but as we were determined to risk nothing, we retired behind the Alpone, where the advance-guard was stationed. The rest of the army took up a position at Caldiero, having three bridges over the Adige in case of retreat, including that of Verona. We remained there very quietly. We spent the time in a complete reorganization; losses were repaired by bringing up healthy men from the depots, and by removing from hospital those who were cured of their wounds or sicknesses. It was considered advisable to skirmish a little, and to shoot every day, so as to familiarize the fresh men with fighting.

I proposed to make a feint with a portion of our troops, and orders were given. It suc-

ceeded at first, and then became more serious. Unfortunately, our left met with a slight check, which decided the Viceroy to give counter-orders. I was unaware of this, as I was preparing to cross the Alpone, the defence of which had considerably given way before the violence of my onslaught; but the Viceroy came in person to the place to desire me to retire, and I had to obey. We returned to camp, regretting that we had not had liberty to reap the full benefit of our first advantages. Prince Eugène was still weighed down by the recollection of Sacilio, and this made him very nervous for long after, especially on two important occasions, of which I shall have to speak later.

We expected the enemy to make a similar demonstration next day, and were prepared to give them a warm reception; but they stayed at home. This immobility was not altogether natural after their victory at Sacilio. I pointed this out to the Viceroy, and urged him to order a strong general reconnaissance. He did so. We followed with our reserves, when, through my telescope, I noticed a hurried movement of carriages and baggage-waggons.

'We have been victorious in Germany,' I said to the Prince; 'the enemy are retiring.'

He also looked through his glass, saw the retreat, and gleefully stretched out his hand to me, thanking me for my foresight and for my

advice, which events had so well justified. He sent orders to the camp to prepare to march, and himself rode up to the advance-guard, who were at the very moment sending back to tell him that the enemy were hastily retreating. When he left me to lead the march, I warned him to be prudent, and not to be over-excited by this adventure.

Some insignificant brushes between our advance-guard and the enemy's rear-guard brought us to the brink of the Piave, the bridge over which had just been burned. It is a large and very swift torrent, like all those in Italy; but they can all be forded except in case of heavy rain or melting snow. The decision to cross was taken, and carried out without difficulty; but all was nearly lost owing to precipitation. I was at the rear, and hastened my movement, so that I came up just in time to witness a check given to our troops, especially to a body of cavalry which had just possessed itself of, but had soon to abandon again, one of the enemy's batteries. The charge had been so impetuous that the gunners had had no time to fire; they were killed, and the artillery General taken prisoner. The Viceroy thought he was dealing only with a rear-guard, but the captured General assured him on his word of honour that the entire Austrian army, commanded by the Archduke John, was there. This news disconcerted the Viceroy. Only a quarter of our army had crossed the water, and they were now

returning in the utmost disorder. Happily the enemy only attacked feebly, being entirely occupied in covering their retreat. My troops* began to come up. The Prince begged me to cross the river in person to stop the fugitives, and to take command of all on the left bank. Preoccupied with what he had heard from the Austrian General, he said to me:

'What are we to do?'

'The bottle is uncorked; we must drink the wine,' I replied. 'You were in too great a hurry, and your troops can hardly escape; but now that they are on the other side, we must support them as best we can.'

We settled that my men should cross as they came up. I ordered that it should be in platoons, and that each man should hold his neighbour's arm. The river had increased considerably; stones slipped from under their feet; some were carried away by the current. It was a sad spectacle; but I was destined, four years later, to see one much more horrible.† When the fugitives began to arrive in disorder, they threw themselves into the water without observing the stepping-stones. I myself rushed in, sword in hand, to drive them back. After changing my

* General Macdonald commanded a corps formed out of Lamarque's and Broussier's divisions of infantry and a brigade of cavalry.

† In 1813, at the passage of the Elster, after the Battle of Leipsic.

clothes, I managed to cross the swiftest part of the current by means of a little pontoon which chanced to be there, and the shoulders of two men set me down dry-foot on the other bank. I assembled the Generals, and announced to them that the army also was going to cross. In fact, the front column of my corps was a third of the way through the river. This movement, no doubt, stopped the enemy's attack, or, at any rate, slackened it. As the troops that had been pursued returned, they took up a position with their back to the left bank, so that a violent attack must either have precipitated them into the water, or compelled them to lay down their arms. My first care, after reassuring in a few words both officers and men, was to change this position for one perpendicular to the river, which thus flanked their left.

General Grenier* had just crossed considerably below me. He attacked and pursued the enemy by the same movement that I was making, so that we found ourselves placed perpendicularly to the river, as I have said. My own troops had been stopped and made to retreat by order of the Viceroy when they were already half-way across the river, because he had seen the rout of which I have spoken, and the pursuit of the enemy. He did not reflect that the best means of stopping it was to reinforce us. He observed to me after-

* He commanded a corps of two divisions.

wards, with some simplicity, that he regarded us as dead men, and saw no object in sacrificing more lives. I took the opportunity of addressing to him some remarks which he admitted were just, but by which, alas! he did not profit, such was the effect produced by the loss of the first battle at Sacilio, which had intimidated him.*

He did not tell me what answer the Emperor had sent on being informed of this defeat, but I learned later that, after reading the despatch, the Emperor had sent for the courier who brought it, and asked whether he had met me, and if so, whereabouts.

'Near Verona,' answered the messenger.

'That is all right,' replied the Emperor.

I had not seen this courier, but was flattered by the reply, as it showed that the Emperor relied upon me to restore his affairs in Italy.

We must return to the movement that I was executing. When my body of troops joined me the disorder was repaired. All who had crossed the Piave marched in splendid order and attacked the enemy, who now began to retreat. However, our extreme right, commanded by General Grenier, halted, although the fire was not very

* The Viceroy at this time was very young. His after career vindicated him from any charge of personal want of courage. Indeed, after the rout of 1812-13, on the retreat from Russia, when even Murat deserted the army, it was the Viceroy of Italy who had the difficult task of reorganising the army during Napoleon's absence in Paris.

hot. I also halted, but for another reason. I perceived towards the middle of our front a mass of the enemy's infantry, covered by a sort of fortification that was nothing more nor less than an enclosure of sufficient extent to pen oxen during the night—a sort of back (*dossée*) of a trench. Some cavalry covered this infantry, who were firing at us. We had not any guns across as yet, I think. While our troops were halting, Colonel Vallin, of the Hussars, came and begged me to give him something to do. I told him not to stir without orders, and added that I would soon find work for him. Thereupon I hastened off to the right to get a better view of the enemy's central position, and to discover the motives of Grenier's inactivity. He told me that his troops needed rest. Just when they ought to have been pursuing vigorously! I gave orders to General Grouchy, who was in command of the cavalry at this point, and while he was conveying them to his men, I turned back to regain the centre. I saw Colonel Vallin and his squadron charging. I foresaw what must inevitably, and eventually did, happen. The enemy's cavalry hurriedly withdrew, and allowed the squadron to advance, thus exposing them to the hot fire of the masked infantry, which I alone had perceived when I commanded the halt. My intention had been to outflank it on the right, and such were my orders to Grouchy. The enemy's cavalry, seeing

Vallin's regiment hesitate, charged, and from where I was I could see that we were not getting the best of it in the mêlée that ensued. I spurred my horse, and came up with the unlucky leader, who was wounded in the hand, and reproached him furiously for having disobeyed my orders. He told me that he had acted upon orders from the Viceroy, who galloped up and said unreflectingly:

'Now then, hussars! let me see you charge those blackguards!'

Vallin had answered that he would have already done it had not I forbidden him to stir.

'Never mind,' answered the Prince; 'charge all the same!'

And he did so.

The Viceroy, who had been watching us from the other bank of the Piave, had made up his mind to cross, and had arrived just in time to order this grand mistake while I was away on the right. I rode up to him, and pointed out to him that he had most inconsiderately deranged my operation. He answered that he fancied there were only a few musketeers there.

'Do you suppose *they* would have stopped me?' I answered, and then proceeded to explain my plan, which might still be carried out.

He applauded it, and congratulated me upon all I had already done; in doing so, he was echoing the sentiments of the army, which was

full of spirit and determination. In replying to the Prince's compliments, I asked to be allowed to carry out my operation, adding that I would show him that I knew what I was about. As I am writing only for you, my son, I need not put on any airs of mock-modesty; I simply tell you the truth with the frankness that I am universally admitted to possess.

'See!' I said to the Viceroy; 'the enemy's right wing is beating a hasty retreat! I am going to cut it off, and to-night I will make you a present of 10,000 prisoners.'

'I can see nothing,' he answered.

'Can you not see that immense cloud of dust gradually drawing away from us?'

'Yes.'

'Well, from that it is easy to divine that a general retreat is going on. Go to the left, make a feint as if to stop that movement, while I bring up the right, and order the centre to advance.'

We parted in a more amicable frame of mind; but it did not last long, for scarcely had he ordered the left to advance, when a few cannon-shot stopped him, and he sent orders to the centre and to the right, for which I was bound, to stop too. Amazed at such an order, I returned to the centre, which I found halted; and thus we lost our chance. I went in search of the Viceroy, whom I found at last. He told me that the enemy seemed inclined to defend themselves, and

that he was unwilling to risk his army; that enough had been done, and that evening was advancing rapidly. Vainly did I point out to him that the firing was already slackening, and that its only object had been to cover the retreat of the right wing. He would pay no heed.

'In that case,' I said, 'I shall take no further responsibility. You are in command; give your orders, and I will carry them out.'

However, he left me the general command, and recrossed the river to spend the night upon the other side; while we remained in a huge meadow, or pasture-ground, without any shelter, and, what was worse still, without food for man or beast, as no baggage could come across until the bridge burned by the enemy had been rebuilt.

The Viceroy joined us early next morning, and General Grenier was ordered to follow him closely. The advance-guard belonged to me as the first corps, but for the present we formed the centre. I accompanied the Prince to the town of Conegliano. The principal officials of the place came out to greet him, and one of them said:

'Ah, your Highness! had you but pushed forward two squadrons, you could have cut off the entire right wing of the Austrians, numbering at least 10,000 men. They were fleeing pell-mell, in the most hopeless confusion of men,

horses, baggage, artillery, etc. Their leaders could not make their voices heard, nor rally a platoon; and the confusion and stampede lasted all night.'

The Prince looked at me regretfully; my only answer was a smile. Indeed, he had stopped my movement in a most untimely manner.

Nothing of importance occurred during the next few days: the enemy continued their hasty retreat, and we reached Udine. My corps was detached, so I could act independently. The rest of the army marched through Tarvis to Klagenfurt, and I was charged to raise the siege of Palmanova; to cross the Isonzo; to take Goritz and Trieste; to do my best to facilitate the passage of General Marmont, Duke of Ragusa, who was under orders to evacuate Dalmatia and join us. Then I was to make for Laybach; to cross the Save, the Drave, and the Mühr; to take Gratz; and, finally, to effect a junction with the bulk of the Army of Italy, and to lead the whole body to join the Grand Army on the Sömmering. This was a large undertaking, and presented considerable difficulties; but I did not regard them as insurmountable. Besides, I had *carte blanche.*

The siege of Palmanova was raised at my approach. The garrison and inhabitants received us as deliverers. I sent a good detachment to Trieste, and the General who commanded it

grumbled that I was 'sacrificing' him; but, as it turned out, he met with no resistance whatever. We crossed the Isonzo by main force, and took Goritz, where large magazines were established. We also found there some siege artillery from Palmanova.

The heights of Prewald were fortified, and connected by earthworks and blockhouses: I battered down all that covered the approaches to them. Our first attacks having been wanting in vigour, I led them myself, and thus taught the Generals that with more decision they would have lost fewer men. They combined together to hinder my operations, which I determined to head and carry out in person.

This line of forts was flanked on the left by precipices, and on the right by a range of very lofty rocks. I sent some light infantry to escalade it, and from below they looked like pigmies: we even succeeded in hoisting up some field-guns. These demonstrations were made with no object but to deceive; however, we succeeded in investing the forts. The detachment from Trieste came up; its leader was charged to send emissaries to the Duke of Ragusa; none could pass, and we had no news of him.

During these operations, I sent to reconnoitre the passages leading to the quicksilver-mines of Idria, and from thence to the highroad between Trieste and Vienna; there were obstacles in the

way of moving our baggage, but they might be overcome. Leaving troops, therefore, to observe the forts, I surveyed the base of the chain of rocks, and came out upon the highroad with the greater part of my forces. I sent reconnoitring parties out in all directions. I marched towards Laybach, where a battalion of the advance-guard met an Austrian battalion in a bend of the road; both were very much in fault, as no scouts were out from either party. To see and to rush at each other with the bayonet was the work of a moment. Our men had the advantage of coming downhill, and the enemy were crushed; only a very small handful of them remained to carry the news of the defeat of the others to Laybach. So little did the enemy count upon the possibility of our march, that they had sent this battalion to reinforce the forts of Prewald, and keep us in check.

An immense entrenched camp was intended to protect Laybach; but the insufficiency of their troops determined the enemy to disarm and abandon the side on our left, as well as the town, and to confine themselves to the defence of the fort, and of the other side. I ordered a reconnaissance of the approaches; they were considered impracticable for a general attack; to besiege it we had no artillery, the bridge over the Save was in part destroyed, and we had neither time nor materials to restore it. I sent a summons, according to

custom, to the Commandant of the camp and forts: he refused to surrender.

The capitulation of the forts of Prewald set a considerable number of my troops at liberty, and the enemy were certain to have had intelligence of this. Their communications with Hungary and Croatia were still open; the liberation of my forces made it all the easier for me to intercept them. The fort of Laybach, as well as the entrenched camp, was covered on our front by a marsh of considerable extent, and on another side by the Save. I could therefore only attack on the extreme right side, as the left was unapproachable from the town. While, however, I was meditating upon the best means of carrying the position, imperative orders reached me to leave only a detachment for purposes of observation, and to make for Klagenfurt with the rest of my army. I could no longer cross the Save, and therefore could only start silently and by night in the direction indicated; in order to prepare for my march, I made active demonstrations against the fort and the entrenched camp. I had caused the marsh to be sounded, and had a road cut through it for the cavalry, who could thus come out upon the Croatian road. Orders were given that the troops who were to start for Klagenfurt were to be ready at nine o'clock that evening. Scarcely had we started, when a *parlementaire* was brought to me. He was charged with a proposal of capitulation.

'You are doing wisely,' I said; 'I was just going to sound the attack.'*

Having thus obtained every facility for temporarily rebuilding the bridge, I made my way direct by Marburg to Gratz, where I joined the Viceroy, who had preceded me.

The results I obtained from this operation, which I conducted alone, were the deliverance of Palmanova, the passage by main force of the Isonzo, the occupation of Goritz, Trieste, Laybach, the forts of Prewald, of that of Laybach, as well as its entrenched camp; ten or twelve thousand prisoners, a hundred guns, ammunition, weapons, flags in proportion, and an immense quantity of provisions. The Emperor expressed his satisfaction to me through the Viceroy.

While we were in front of Laybach I was seized, as well as some of my men, with dysentery, which weakened me terribly, and which was increased by the work, and by the worries and annoyances which were being secretly fostered against me by two of the principal Generals. One of them was weak enough in mind and wits to allow himself to be influenced by the other,† who declared that the Emperor had only employed me in order to ruin me, that they would be dragged

* As all the details of this extraordinary event are noted in my correspondence, I will not repeat them here.—*Note by Marshal Macdonald.*

† This was General Lamarque; the former was General Broussier.

into my disgrace, that neither they nor the troops would obtain any favour or reward, etc. All this was repeated to me.

I had indeed noticed that some of my orders had been tardily executed when activity was necessary, and I should certainly have failed in some of my enterprises had I not directed them myself, which served only to increase the resentment of my antagonists, who found that they only obtained a small share in the success that crowned them. The situation, however, was becoming critical, and an opportunity presenting itself—two days before the capitulation of Laybach—I reprimanded one of them sharply, and threatened to put under arrest and send to the Emperor anyone who did not obey orders on the spot. This was in presence of a considerable number of officers and men, who loudly applauded my decision. Thenceforward my gentlemen did no more than mutter, but that did not trouble me.

CHAPTER XV.

Arrival at Gratz—Advance to Raab—Battle of Raab—Before Komorn—The Eve of Wagram—Battle of Wagram—The Marshal's Bâton.

SHORTLY before my arrival at Gratz, I met a Russian officer, who told me of the sad results of the Battle of Essling. Our successes were such a poor compensation for such an unhappy event, that our joy was naturally turned into sorrowful regret. I found General Grouchy, who had preceded me by a few hours, at Gratz, whence he withdrew his troops to give place to mine. The Archduke John, who had retired into Hungary, had not thought it necessary to defend the town, notwithstanding a well-bastioned rampart and the river Mühr, which was not easy to cross without pontoons. Grouchy had just concluded an agreement whereby the elevated fort that dominated Gratz was not to be attacked from the town, so as to preserve the latter from all harm. By this means, too, the bridge over the Mühr was given up. I therefore contented myself with investing the fort externally, and with preparing means to

obtain possession of it either by a *coup-de-main* or by blockade.

We were not even permitted to take the rest we all needed, after so much labour and so many forced marches. I received orders to march into Hungary and to cause the fort to be observed, and even attacked if I saw fit. My route lay by Kermünd, the Lake of Neusiedel and Papa; we were then on the tracks of the Archduke's Austrian army, which was retreating to the camp at Raab. The Viceroy followed it. His cavalry had a sharp brush with the enemy, owing to their having too lightly engaged with an inferior force. One of our divisions lost its way and missed the rendezvous.

Although the Viceroy had sent me orders to take up my position at Papa, while awaiting fresh instructions, I did not think in his interest and in that of the army that I should obey. I was right, and he afterwards thanked me cordially, for he had much compromised the troops that he was leading to Raab by a serious and very imprudent engagement. I had started on my march, following the cavalry, who preceded us. The distance from Papa to the place where the engagement was being fought was, if I remember rightly, seven or eight leagues.* When I had advanced about two-thirds of the distance, I met an officer

* The French *lieue*, which I have rendered 'league,' is about $2\frac{3}{10}$ miles in English measure.—*Translator's note.*

from the Prince, bearing orders to raise my camp and join him. When the officer had left the Viceroy they were only skirmishing. I made the utmost speed, but it was impossible to arrive in time to take part in the attack; but at least we should have been able to assist the retreat, if such had unfortunately been necessary. The Commander-in-chief was actively engaged, and had already been repulsed several times when I came up; but as I turned the corner of a wood and of the heights, the battlefield was disclosed to my view. Several regiments were retreating in disorder; efforts were being made to rally them. I galloped up and presented myself to the Viceroy, who expressed delighted surprise at seeing me so speedily.

'I was very sorry,' he said, 'to leave you at Papa; you would have been very useful to me in this critical situation.'

'You have made a greater mistake than that,' I answered; 'that of giving and risking a battle with only a portion of your army, when you have that of the Archduke in front of you, in what seems to me a fairly strong position. But take comfort, here is my *corps d'armée*.'

'Where?' he asked quickly.

'Look behind you; here it is just debouching.'

'How grateful I am to you for your foresight!' said the Prince, affectionately pressing my hand.

'Now then,' I said, 'one more attempt. Here is help; I am going to send up my troops.'

'No,' he replied; 'let them rest. We will call upon them later.'

General Grenier, who commanded the right, succeeded at length in routing the enemy and crowning the heights. We joined him. The sight of my men had revived the spirits of his. We ought to have taken advantage of this and pressed the enemy; but he refused, thinking that he had done enough, and saying that his men were too tired and needed rest. I tried to induce the Viceroy to give his orders, but recent events had made him nervous. The enemy's infantry, however, were in disorder; we sent out some horse, unfortunately without any cohesion, and the enemy were allowed to retreat quietly.

No notice was taken of my energetic protests, or of my saying that we should have to fight these same troops again next day, and perhaps at a disadvantage; that the Emperor's first question, on hearing of our victory, would be:

'Where are the results—the prisoners, guns, baggage?'

'You are too enterprising,' said the Viceroy.

'But,' I remonstrated, 'here, as at the Piave, you have only to stoop to pick up everything.'

He replied that he feared a sortie from the garrison at Raab if he followed in pursuit. I pointed out that if the sortie were going to take

place it would have been during the action, and not when the troops were in full flight; that the very fact that no sortie had been made was a proof of the weakness of the garrison, which perhaps was doing its best with very inadequate forces, but which could not fail to be disheartened by what had just passed beneath their eyes. All was in vain, and the Prince gave orders for the camp to be pitched.

He took me to supper with him, and on the way confirmed to me what he had already written more than once, the tokens of pleasure that the Emperor had given over my services, and the rapid and surprising successes of my *corps d'armée.*

Next day I followed the enemy, who were much in advance of us. They were making for Komorn, a very strong place on the right bank of the Danube. We learned that the disorder into which they had been thrown at Raab had not yet been repaired. We spent some time in observation upon the river, vainly trying to break the bridge between the fortress and the left bank by floating down the stream against it some large boats laden with stones, which the enemy had not had time to sink. They had destroyed many others laden with grain of all kinds. There were nothing but water-mills there, and their destruction was a great injury to us; but the French soldier, always ingenious and in-

dustrious, found some smooth stones with which to grind his corn. Without this discovery there would have been no bread amid the abundance of grain.

The Grand Army at Vienna and the inhabitants suffered terribly from scarcity, chiefly of meat. Hungary, a country rich in crops, wine, cattle, etc., where also many horses are bred, offered us boundless resources. I immediately sent large convoys of wheat and oats, as well as 10,000 oxen, to the Emperor's headquarters. We also levied a large number of horses to remount our hussars and chasseurs, the breed being specially well adapted to light troops. Except the serfs, all the men wore hussar costume, and it is from them that it has been so universally copied. During the first days of our entrance into the kingdom we took them for irregular troops; happily, we found them very peaceable.

After our fruitless attempt to destroy the bridge at Komorn, I received orders to advance towards Ofen, capital of Hungary; but shortly afterwards was recalled by forced marches to the chief headquarters at Ebersdorf, opposite the island of Lobau. It was clear that a great operation was being prepared. We were not the last to arrive, and by nine o'clock in the evening of July 4 we were at our posts on the Danube at the crossing-place that had been selected for the surprise of the enemy. We had marched sixty

leagues in three days, and notwithstanding our excessive fatigue, and the heat of the season, we had but few laggards, so anxious were the men of the Army of Italy to take part in the great events that were preparing, and to fight in presence of their brothers-in-arms of the Grand Army, and under the very eyes of the Emperor.

That night an appalling storm burst upon us; rain and hail fell in torrents, driven by a raging north wind, the whistling of which mingled with the peals of thunder and roar of cannon. This tempest was extremely favourable to our passage of the Danube upon bridges built on piles, at which they had been working since the fatal 22nd of the previous May;* they were masked by the thickly-wooded island of Lobau. I landed upon the island at about six o'clock in the morning; what we most wanted was a good fire to dry us, but the sun soon came out and warmed us with his kindly rays. Meanwhile, several corps of the Grand Army, which had roused the enemy from their security, were driving back their advance-guard, and this, being supported from behind, was slowly retreating towards the intrenched position of the camp.

I moved forward in my turn, and was momentarily placed in the second rank with the remainder of the Army of Italy. Scarcely had I deployed, being myself on the extreme right,

* The Battle of Essling had been fought on May 21 and 22.

when I heard cries of 'Long live the Emperor!' coming from the left.

The soldiers, as he approached, raised their shakos upon their bayonets in token of joy. He turned his horse towards the direction whence the cheering proceeded, and, recognising the Army of Italy, rode down the line; as he approached the right, I moved forward slightly. He spoke to no one, merely saluting with his hand. In spite of what the Viceroy had told me, that I should be pleased with my first interview, I was not more favoured than the rest. I do not know where Prince Eugène then was, but immediately on hearing that the Emperor had passed, he hastened up and said:

'Well, I hope you were satisfied. No doubt he confirmed by word of mouth all that I have written to you?'

'He did not address a single word to me.'

'What?'

'Not a word. He merely nodded, as if to say: "I can see through you, you rascal!"'

The kind Prince was miserable, fearing, of course wrongly, lest I should think that he had been a well-meaning but clumsy interpreter; and he gave me his word of honour, of which I had no need, so convinced was I of his friendly and honest truthfulness, that he had only written to me the Emperor's exact words.

It was already late. The troops of the Grand

Army, tired with marching and fighting since the morning, formed into columns to let us pass. We thus had the honour of becoming the front rank and of pursuing the enemy, who only turned now and again in order to check our ardour, They eventually regained their positions, and we halted within short cannon-range. I was then in front of the position at Wagram; the village of that name was on the left, and that of Baumersdorf on the right. A violent cannonade continued along the whole line while we were forming.

The Emperor came up to speak to the Viceroy. with whom I was talking; I fell back some yards. He did not speak to me as yet, but I heard him say somewhat carelessly:

'Order General Macdonald to attack and carry the plateau. The enemy are retiring, and we must make some prisoners.'

Thereupon he went away. The Prince, joining me, said:

'Do you know what the Emperor has just been saying to me?'

'Yes,' I replied; 'I heard his orders.'

'Well, what is your opinion?'

'I think the Emperor is mistaken; the enemy are not leaving, they are simply retiring to the intrenched position they have selected for the battle. Do you not see, the entire army is there, looking very brave? In order to carry through

such an undertaking, although we have but an hour of daylight left, we should need to attack with the whole army. Lose no time—go, or else send these remarks of mine to the Emperor.'

But he was afraid of him, and answered:

'Not I! He ordered us to attack; let us do it.'

'So be it,' I answered; 'but you will see how we shall be beaten,' which of course happened, as it could not fail to do.

We started, well protected by artillery, but our leading columns soon stopped at the Russbach, a stream with steep banks, which covered the Austrian front. I sprang to the ground, made my staff do the same, and sword in hand we set the example of crossing it, and were followed by the men. This bold stroke drove the enemy back, and we obtained possession of the plateau. We were obliged to halt near their huts, and form into columns, in order to attack the enemy, drawn up not far off, and also to wait till General Grenier, who was crossing the stream with his troops, could come up to our support. We had passed the villages of Wagram and Baumersdorf, which other corps of the Grand Army had failed to take; they had even retreated. The enemy debouched in large numbers, and attacked one flank, while the columns that we had held in check advanced against us.

General Grenier's troops, amazed at this unexpected onslaught, threw themselves in disorder

among my men, breaking their lines and scattering them All my efforts to restrain them were vain, although, sword in hand, with the majority of the officers, I had drawn up a line to check the disorder. The rout commenced, and we were carried away, crossing the stream in the utmost confusion. The Prince, who had remained on the other side, tried to stop the fugitives. On coming close to him, I pointed out that he could not stop men under such a sharp fire, as they were now terror-stricken, although a few minutes before they had displayed such resolution; that what he should do was to send some detachments of cavalry out of range, and that the fugitives would naturally stop on reaching them. Fortunately, the enemy was satisfied with having repulsed us, and dared not cross the stream in pursuit, although a few squadrons would have sufficed to disperse us, for night had come on, and we should have imagined ourselves charged by the entire Austrian army, and the result would not be difficult to imagine. My loss in killed, wounded, and prisoners was enormous, amounting to nearly two thousand men. General Grenier had his hand shattered by a bullet at the beginning of this 'brush,' as the Emperor called it.

I did not leave the Viceroy. We passed the night out of doors, as did all the army, keeping a sharp look-out while our officers tried to rally the fugitives.

'What will the Emperor think?' asked the Prince sadly.

'Nothing detrimental to you or me. He will realize, now that it is too late, that his orders were ill-considered. Where you were wrong was in not taking or sending to him the observations that I had made to you before embarking upon this unlucky attempt, the result of which was a foregone conclusion.'

At daybreak, on July 6, a violent cannonade began on our extreme right. We re-established our line, and formed up. The enemy in front of us remained motionless, but soon advanced some troops on the right; they slowly descended the heights as if to cross the stream in front of Bernadotte, who was posted on my left in front of the village of Wagram. On the right was Marshal Davoust,* who, marching against the enemy, was either warned, or else met them coming towards him. The firing was violent, and, as the Marshal believed that he had the entire Austrian force against him, all our reserves were ordered up to support him, and effect a diversion. The Emperor came to the spot where I was, and addressed himself directly to me, saying:

'Last night you carried the plateau of Wagram; you know the way up to it; carry it again. Marmont will at the same time attack the village

* Duke of Auerstadt and Prince of Eckmühl.—*Translator's note.*

of Baumersdorf; you and he seem to understand each other; I will send him to you.'

Marmont soon came, and we agreed to support each other mutually; and, in order not to expose ourselves to a repetition of the previous evening's occurrences, the General quite understood that the village should be carried before I commenced my attack upon the plateau; but while we were commencing operations, other events were taking place behind us on the left.

Masséna commanded at the real point of attack. The Marshal could not make a stand against troops much superior to his own. He was driven back with great loss on to the *tête-de-pont*, by which we had passed after crossing the Danube. The Austrians sent forward their right. Davoust was kept in check; Bernadotte, repulsed before Wagram, left me uncovered. The movements of the enemy on my left and rear were concealed from me by little hillocks and inequalities in the ground. I slowly advanced towards the plateau, because Marmont had met with considerable resistance at the village of Baumersdorf, when the Emperor came up and changed my destination.

The retreat of Masséna, which I then learned for the first time, and the retrograde movement made by Bernadotte, had left the centre of the army exposed. I therefore received orders to change my direction—to turn almost completely

Edouard Girardet del. H. Vernet pinxit. Paul Girardet sc.

NAPOLEON AT THE BATTLE OF WAGRAM

Paris for Richard Bentley and Son 1892

Printed by Ch. Wittmann Paris

round, and go and take up my position near the hillocks. The Emperor betook himself to the highest of these in order to observe, and kept sending officers, one after another, to me to hasten my movements. The manœuvre that I was carrying out, however, demanded some time, and, besides, I thought it would be imprudent to arrive disordered and straggling.

Vexed and anxious to know the reason for these reiterated orders, I galloped towards the Emperor, when I saw him leaving the hillock as fast as his horse could go, followed by his numerous staff. I continued, however, and gained the top of the hillock he had just quitted, when at once I saw what was the matter. The enemy, who were in great numbers at this point, were marching the more boldly that they encountered no resistance: I then understood (as the Emperor afterwards admitted) that his intention in thus hurrying me was to show that he was not in retreat there, as he was on the left. It was therefore necessary to risk something in order to carry this out with the utmost speed; but little did I think that this spot was to become shortly afterwards the principal point of attack, against which the numerous forces of the enemy would come to shatter themselves.

I therefore ordered four battalions, followed by four others which I deployed in two lines, to advance at the double; and while my artillery

opened fire, and that of the Guard took up position (which the Emperor called the hundred gun battery), my two divisions formed themselves into attacking columns. The enemy, who were still advancing, halted; and, redoubling their fire, caused us terrible damage. However, in proportion as my lines became unserviceable, I drew them up closer together, and made them dress as at drill. While I was doing this, I saw the enemy's cavalry preparing to charge, and had barely time to close my second line on the first one; they were flanked by the two divisions still in columns, and the square was completed by a portion of General Nansouty's cavalry that had been put under my orders since the morning. I ordered both ranks to open fire, my famous battery mowing down the cavalry. My hot fire broke them just as they were preparing to charge; many men and horses fell pierced by our bayonets. The smoke rising disclosed to me the enemy in the utmost disorder, which was increased by their attempt to retreat. I ordered an advance with levelled bayonets, after previously commanding Nansouty to charge, at the same time desiring the cavalry officers whom I saw behind me to do likewise. Unfortunately, they were not under my orders, and the Emperor was not there to give any.

The enemy were in extreme disorder; but their fire during their retreat did us much harm.

I was in despair at the slowness of General Nansouty. Not far from us I saw a large number of abandoned pieces of cannon; the Austrian officers were bringing up men, by dint of blows with the flat of their swords, to remove them. At last Nansouty moved, but too late to profit by the gap that I had made in the Austrian centre. I halted to allow his division to pass; I was, moreover, so weakened that I dared not venture into the plain to pursue the enemy (the more so as Nansouty's cavalry was repulsed, but not followed) until the Emperor sent me reinforcements. Unfortunately, the favourable moment had been allowed to slip. The results would have been enormous had Nansouty charged immediately, supported by the cavalry which was in the rear.

I had no staff-officers round me—one of my aides-de-camp had been killed, as well as my orderlies; the others were either incapacitated or away on a mission. While I was thus awaiting reinforcements, a general officer in full uniform rode up to me. I did not know him. After the usual greetings, he paid me great compliments upon the action that had just occurred, and finished by inquiring my name, which I gave him.

'I knew you by reputation,' he said; 'and am happy to make your acquaintance on a field of battle so glorious for you.'

After replying to his compliment, I, in my turn, asked him his name: he was General Walther, of the Guard; I had never heard of him.

'Do you,' I asked, 'command that fine and large body of cavalry which I perceive in the rear?'

'I do.'

'Then why in the world did you not charge the enemy at the decisive moment, after I had thrown them into such disorder, and after I had begged you to several times? The Emperor ought to, and will, be very angry with his Guard for remaining motionless when so glorious a share was offered to them, which might have brought about such enormous and decisive results!'

'In the Guard,' replied he, 'we require orders direct from the Emperor himself, or from our chief, Marshal Bessières. Now, as the latter was wounded, there only remained the Emperor, and he sent us no orders.'

He added that at the Battle of Essling, several Generals had made use of regiments of Guards, and that they had suffered very much; wherefore, since then, Marshal Bessières had obtained instructions that they should only act altogether and under his orders, or under the direct command of the Emperor.

'But,' I retorted, 'there are circumstances in which such a rule cannot be considered as absolute—such a case as this, for example. The

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THE BATTLE OF WAGRAM

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Emperor could not have failed to approve your action, as it would have secured the destruction of a considerable portion of the Austrian army. And, supposing that we had been repulsed instead of gaining a success, would you not have protected us? and would you have retired from the field without a blow because you had received no orders?'

These questions embarrassed him; he saluted, and returned to his troop. I afterwards learned that the Emperor had treated him and the other Generals of the Guard very severely indeed; but the fault really lay with the Emperor himself. He should not have forgotten the restriction he had imposed, and should have remained in person at the principal centre of the action to direct everything. Later on, in talking over these occurrences with me, he was still very bitter against his Guard.

'Why did you not make them act?' he said. 'I put them under your orders!'

'I knew nothing about that,' I replied. 'I limited myself to repeated, but fruitless, requests. And how could I have made them charge, when I had endless trouble to get General Nansouty to move? He wanted so much time to form his men!'

'That is true,' said the Emperor; 'he is rather slow.'

The reinforcement I had asked for came at last; it was composed of General Wrede's

Bavarian division, and of General Guyot's brigade of light cavalry of the Guard. The enemy's retrograde movement had commenced, and I began mine to follow them. I thought the whole *corps d'armée* were doing the same. Towards evening I caught up the rear-guard close by a village called Süssenbrünn, which was fortified with earthworks. I made a feint of attacking in front, while I made an oblique movement to flank it; but the Austrian General, discovering my intentions, immediately beat a retreat. I called back the outflanking party, and warned General Guyot to hold himself in readiness to charge. He sent me back word that his Guards were always ready, a boast that he justified a moment later; for scarcely had I given orders to attack, than both his men and the Bavarians charged together. The two troops stormed the camp, and cut off the column, bringing me back 5,000 or 6,000 prisoners and ten guns. Scarcely were these prisoners removed, when a reserve, posted on a height commanding the village, assailed us with bullets, grapeshot, and a well-sustained musketry-fire. I saw General Wrede fall, and hastened to his assistance; his men raised him up, and he then said to me:

'Tell the Emperor that I die for him; I recommend to him my wife and children.'

He was being supported, and, to reassure him, I said, laughing:

'I think that you will be able to make this recommendation to him yourself; and, what is more, that your wife will continue to have children by you.'

It proved to be a slight wound from a bullet that had grazed his side. The wind of the bullet had made him giddy.

The firing was then very severe, and the flames of the burning village helped to display our weakness, especially as night was coming on, and the enemy could see to shoot straighter. I became seriously uneasy on looking round and finding myself isolated; I had been so occupied in pursuing the enemy that I had failed to notice that the army was not following. I did not know what singular motive had stopped or suspended its movement, for at five o'clock they had taken up position, and I had received no orders countermanding my advance.

The Emperor, on the other hand, was much surprised to hear such persistent firing going on far off at one particular point of the battlefield. He sent several officers to discover the cause. I had no need to give explanations; our position spoke for itself. From these officers I learned that the whole army had been bivouacked since five o'clock.

Masséna also was a long way to the rear of my left. He also sent to know which was the adventurous corps.

Meanwhile, in the twilight, and by lying at full length on the ground, we could distinguish in the distance some bodies of cavalry coming towards us, or rather towards the fire, and this reassured me; but if the enemy had had any pluck, they could have surrounded me with very superior forces, seeing that all their reserves were collected on the heights. Fortunately, their one idea was to cover the retreat and disorder of their wings.

The firing ceased on either side about eleven o'clock, but we remained under arms till daybreak. As I then perceived that the enemy had retired, I sent my cavalry in pursuit while waiting for orders. They kept on sending back numerous prisoners, including those taken the previous evening; these amounted in the aggregate to 10,000, and fifteen guns. At the Island of Lobau 20,000 prisoners had been made. I had therefore captured half the total, and the artillery I took was all that was captured.

A few hours later the Viceroy passed; he gave us great praise, and said that the Emperor was very pleased with me, that he had as yet given no orders as to our ulterior movements, that I was to wait, and that he would follow my cavalry. I then noticed for the first time that my horse had received a bullet in the neck, but which had remained between the skin and the flesh; he was taken away in order that it might be extracted. As for me, I went to one of the houses

in the town, where I had passed a few hours the previous night, worn out, and suffering from a kick given me by my horse the day before. This is how it happened: I had had my sword in hand during the action; having dismounted while waiting for the reinforcements, I mounted again on their arrival. In doing so I pricked the animal's crupper with the point of my sword, which I still held, having lost my scabbard. Had I been farther away, I should have had my thigh broken, or it might have been even worse.

I soon fell asleep, but not for long, as I was awakened by cries of 'Long live the Emperor!' which redoubled when he entered my camp. I asked for my horse, but he had been taken away. I had no other, as the rest were far behind. As I could not walk, I remained on my straw, when I heard someone inquiring for me. It was an orderly officer, either M. Anatole de Montesquiou, or his brother, who was afterwards killed in Spain. He came by the Emperor's order to look for me. On my remarking that I had no horse and could not walk, he offered me his, which I accepted. I saw the Emperor surrounded by my troops, whom he was congratulating. He approached me, and embracing me cordially, said:

'Let us be friends henceforward.'

'Yes,' I answered, 'till death.' And I have kept my word, not only up to the time of his abdication, but even beyond it. He added:

'You have behaved valiantly, and have rendered me the greatest services, as, indeed, throughout the entire campaign. On the battle-field of your glory, where I owe you so large a part of yesterday's success, I make you a Marshal of *France*'* (he used this expression instead of 'of *the Empire*'). 'You have long deserved it.'

'Sire,' I answered, 'since you are satisfied with us, let the rewards and recompenses be apportioned and distributed among my army corps, beginning with Generals Lamarque, Broussier, etc., who so ably seconded me.'

'Anything you please,' he replied; 'I have nothing to refuse you.'

Thereupon he went away much moved, as I was also. Thus did I avenge myself for all the petty annoyances caused me by General Lamarque, who, although he had heard me mention his name first of all, still continued to worry me.

Scarcely had the Emperor turned his horse's head, when many exalted personages came to congratulate and compliment me. The one who showed me most affection was the Duke de Bassano, at that time Secretary of State, then Berthier, Prince of Neuchâtel, Major-General of the army. Both these men were in Napoleon's most intimate confidence.

* Macdonald was the only Marshal created on a field of battle.—Michaud, 'Biographie Universelle.'—*Translator's note.*

'No doubt you knew what he intended to do?' I said to the latter.

'No,' he replied naïvely.

Then came embraces and handshakings that I thought would never end. Many would have passed me by had it not been for the Emperor's favour.

The Emperor caught up the Viceroy, and related to him with considerable emotion the scene which had just taken place and my elevation. The latter promptly despatched an aide-de-camp to congratulate me, to invite me to breakfast, and to beg me to bring my troops forward on the highroad between Vienna and Wolkersdorf. I found the Prince in the hunting-lodge known as the Rendezvous; he was at table with the Artillery-Generals Lariboisière and Sorbier, the former of whom was killed at Königsberg, at the end of the campaign of 1812, the latter still living in the neighbourhood of Nevers. As soon as I was announced, he hastened to meet me, and we embraced each other effusively.

'The good accounts that you have given of me have procured me this honour,' I said to him. 'I shall never forget it.'

'It is you, and you alone,' he replied, 'who have gained your bâton.'

The others joined in congratulating me; I only knew Lariboisière by reputation.

'I am sure,' I continued to the Prince, 'that

you knew what the Emperor had in contemplation, though you concealed it from me this morning.'

He answered frankly, 'No,' and added after a moment's thought, 'I remember now that while I was walking and talking with the Emperor in his tent early this morning we spoke of the battle. He regretted that so little had resulted from it, and after a moment's silence said: "It is not Macdonald's fault, though, for he worked very hard." I see now,' added the Prince, 'that he was then thinking of rewarding you, and was determined to give as much *éclat* as possible to your nomination.'

Such was the circumstance that raised me to the dignity of which, I am convinced, I had been deprived by intrigue when the first appointments were made. It was necessary to have had the chief command of armies to obtain it, and I had had temporary command of that of the North, full command of those of Rome, Naples, and the Grisons, while several others had only commanded large divisions or wings. I think that I have already said that I had against me my intimacy with a person belonging to the Emperor's family, the Moreau trial, in which an attempt had been made to implicate me, but which attempt signally failed, as I was proved entirely innocent of any complicity, and finally intrigue and jealousy. One Marshal the less, and especially a man who had

every claim to the dignity, was a victory for the vain and the ambitious.

We are indebted to the kindness of Mr. MacNab for an interesting letter written by Macdonald, then newly created Marshal, to his grandfather, two days after the Battle of Wagram.

Stamersdorf,
July 8, 1809.

So highly do I value and cherish your esteem, sir, and so convinced [am I] of the interest you bear towards me, that I lose not an instant in informing you of an event which cannot fail to exercise a powerful influence upon my future and that of my children.

My misfortunes are over and done with. The Emperor, who condescended to notice my conduct at the two battles of *Enzersdorf** and *Wagram*, especially at the latter, to the success of which I was fortunately able to contribute, came next morning to my camp, publicly expressed to me in most flattering terms his appreciation of my conduct, restored to me his friendship and confidence, and, embracing me upon the battlefield, raised me to the dignity of Marshal of France.

Judge, sir, of my surprise and emotion, as I had

* This is the name given by Macdonald to the engagement of July 5.

no reason to anticipate so speedy and unhoped-for a return to the good graces of his Majesty. Therefore, with all my heart and soul, I have vowed to him unlimited devotion and attachment.

The crossing of the Danube was a masterpiece of prodigious genius, and it was reserved for the Emperor to conceive, create, and carry it out. It was performed in presence of an army of over 180,000 men. The enemy expected the attempt to be made at the same point as that of May 21.* They had prepared tremendous entrenchments, and had brought up a formidable body of artillery; but, to their great surprise, they suddenly saw us attack their left flank and turn all the lines of their redoubts. We drove them back three leagues, and when, next day, they tried conclusions with us, they lost the game.

Never, sir, had two armies a mightier force of artillery, never was battle fought more obstinately. Picture to yourself 1,000 or 1,200 pieces of cannon vomiting forth death upon nearly 350,000 combatants, and you will have an idea of what this hotly-disputed field of battle was like. The enemy, posted upon the heights, prudently entrenched in all the villages, formed a sort of crescent, or horse-shoe. The Emperor did not hesitate to enter into the midst of them, and to take up a parallel position.

His Majesty did me the honour of giving me

* First day of the Battle of Essling.

the command of a corps, with orders to pierce the enemy's centre. I, fortunately, succeeded, notwithstanding the fire of a hundred guns, masses of infantry, and charges of cavalry, led by the Archduke Charles in person. His infantry would never cross bayonets with mine, nor would his cavalry wait till mine came up; the Uhlans alone made a stand, and they were scattered.

I pursued the enemy closely with bayonet and cannon for about four leagues, and it was only at ten o'clock at night that, worn out and overwhelmed with fatigue, my men ceased their firing and their pursuit.

The same success attended us at all other points. His Majesty, who directed everything, amazed me by his calmness and by the precision of his orders. It was the first time I had fought under his eyes, and this opportunity gave me an even higher opinion than I already had of his great talents, as I was able to form my own judgment upon them.

The enemy's losses in killed, wounded, and taken prisoners are enormous. The Archduke Charles is himself wounded. My corps suffered more than any other. Out of three aides-de-camp, I have had one killed and another wounded; my chief of the staff and three out of my four staff-officers were wounded, and their horses killed. Out of two orderly officers, one was wounded, and the other's horse was killed; and, finally, my four dragoon orderlies were killed,

together with their horses, close beside me. As to myself, I came through it in safety with Séguin, my aide-de-camp; I received nothing worse than a kick from a horse on the thigh, but it was a good one. My horse received a charge of grapeshot in his neck, and my sword, which I carried in my hand, was broken by a bullet.

There, sir, is my plain, unvarnished little story. You must send me many congratulations: first, upon the recovery of his Majesty's favour; secondly, upon my new rank; and thirdly, upon having escaped so miraculously from so many dangers.

I embrace you affectionately, and shall yet see you again, I trust, at Courcelles. I embrace Alexander, and would beg you to place me at the feet of Mdlle. MacNab.

MACDONALD.

NOTE.

For the subjoined note on the family of Marshal Macdonald, and on his visit to the Hebrides, the Translator is indebted to the kindness of Mr. Alexander Carmichael.

Stephen James Joseph Alexander Macdonald was the son of Vall Macachaim, who assumed the name of Vall Macdonald. Vall Macachaim was the son of Ronald Macachaim, a farmer at Houghbeag, South Uist, in the Western Isles of Scotland.

The Macachaims of Uist are a far-away sept of the Macdonalds of Clanranald. They came from Morar, the mainland estate, to Uist, the insular property of the Clanranalds. Vall Macachaim had been studying for the Church, and attended the Scotch College in Paris. He had given up the Church, however, and was schoolmaster of the parish and tutor in the family of Clanranald. When Flora Macdonald undertook the perilous task of taking Prince Charlie from Uist to Skye, it was arranged that Vall Macachaim should also go in the twofold capacity of protector to Flora

and interpreter, as he spoke French fluently. More fortunate than Flora Macdonald, Vall effected his escape to France in the same vessel that bore the Prince. Here he changed his name to Macdonald, presumably because the name of his clan was better known than that of his sept.

Through the influence of Prince Charlie and his utility in interpreting between the Scotch and the French, Vall obtained a commission in Ogilvie's regiment of foot, as one of the two Scotch regiments was known in France. He became a Lieutenant, and his son rose to be Marshal of France and Duke of Tarentum.

The Marshal used to remit money to his relatives in Uist, and one of his cousins visited him in France at his request. In 1825 the Marshal visited Great Britain, and was everywhere received with distinguished honour, both by the Government and people. The cordiality of his reception in London was only equalled by that of his reception in Edinburgh and Inverness. He visited the field of Culloden, and expressed strong disapprobation at the Highlanders for engaging the Royal troops in such a place.

Marshal Macdonald visited the Western Isles in a revenue cruiser placed at his disposal by Government, accompanied by Mr. Ranald Macdonald, Writer to the Signet in Edinburgh, who was a son of Macdonald of Boisdale, a scion of the Macdonalds of Clanranald.

The Marshal walked from the ford at Lochdar to Houghbeag, a distance of ten miles. On coming in sight of the river he exclaimed :

'That is the river Hough! I know it from my father's description! Many a salmon has he caught there!'

He sent for all his relations in the neighbourhood. When his blind old uncle was brought to him, he embraced him affectionately, saying :

'You dear old man, how like you are to my own father!'

He addressed his relations in French and broken Gaelic, they answering him in Gaelic, for none of them could speak any English. He distributed sums of money, varying in value, among them, giving to some £20, and to others larger amounts or fixed annuities. He took earth from the floor of the house where his father was born, and potatoes from the garden, and these he placed in a bag and carried home with him to France. He planted the potatoes in his garden, and gave orders that the earth should be placed in his coffin after his death.

From Houghbeag he crossed the hills to Glen Corrodail to visit the cave in which Prince Charlie and a few faithful followers lived for six weeks after Culloden. It is a walk of about two hours over very rough roads; but the Marshal, then about sixty years of age, travelled the mountains with ease.

From Corrodail he re-embarked on board the cruiser that had brought him to the island. Many persons are still living who saw the Marshal when in Uist. They all describe him as a man of about the middle height, well built and muscular, but not stout. They say that he resembled in form, features and voice his kinsfolk in Uist, but in complexion they differed, he being dark and sallow, and they fair and ruddy.

Flora Macdonald and Vall Macachaim were remotely, but very remotely, connected, through the Clanranalds. Flora was nearly related to the Clanranalds, and by the Lady Clanranald of the day she was much beloved and admired, as indeed she was by all who knew her. She was not born, as many people, even natives of Skye, suppose, in the island of Skye, but in the island of South Uist, on the farm of Mitton. Some six miles farther north is Houghbeag, where Vall Macachaim, father of the Marshal, was born.

14

END OF VOL. I.

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WITH YOU, RIGHT THROUGH

on 15 October, 2018